

Wuyuan has spectacular natural scenery of mountains, streams, bamboo groves, trees, bridges and ferry landings. **Page 16**



Had Dauthier not come to China, he would have been a member of the American middle class, leading a wealthy and easy life. **Page 9**



The ceremony is completed when the newlyweds share a drink of *jiaobeijiu*, a spirit drunk from two cups tied with a red cord. **Page 10**

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By Annie Wei

To many foreign residents of Beijing, Maizidian means Chaoyang Park West Gate – an alternative bar strip to Sanlitun north and south streets, a place to buy German sausage, Italian pasta, French cheese and real bread.

Maizidian neighborhood committee held a press conference at 21st Century Theater on September 10 to launch the construction of an “international community.” At the same time, a study was released on developing such a community, prepared by the neighborhood committee together with Beijing International Economic and Trade Research Institute and Beijing WTO Affairs Center.

Maizidian neighborhood committee is responsible for an area loosely defined as lying between the East Third and Fourth Ring roads, and Chaoyang Gongyuan Nanlu and the Airport Expressway.

The 7-square-kilometer area, which is mostly taken up by Chaoyang Park, includes Xiaoguangli, Zaoying Beili, Zaoying Nanli and Nongzhan Nanli. It is home to over 31,000 registered local residents and almost 8,000 registered expatriates.

As well as Beijing's third embassy district, the area includes the Lufthansa Center commercial area, several five-star hotels, including the Sheraton, Kempinski and Hilton; high-end apartment and office complexes, such as Palm Springs and the Sunflower Tower, a number of convenience stores serving the foreign community and several popular bars and nightclubs.

According to the survey, 87 percent of local residents welcome the idea of Maizidian International Community. This is hardly surprising, given that a basic requirement for a world standard international community is an eco-friendly environment. Generally, housing values rise as the surrounding environment improves.

Lizzie Li, a senior manager of a real estate company dealing with expatriate clients, told *Beijing Today*, “I think Maizidian District is the area with the most potential in Beijing. And it has better traffic conditions than Guomao and Dongzhimen, and a better view.”

The buzz about the international community also provides a boost to the real estate industry. Li said for rented apartments, a good community is the key to keeping clients. Building a safe, friendly community will attract more clients, while if those features are lacking, residents will move when their one-year lease is up.

Wang Zhe, vice-president of Beijing Jiacheng Real Estate, which has a new office building under construction in the Sanyuanqiao area, told *Beijing Today*, “When we looked for new project locations, the third embassy area caught our attention.”

Wang pointed out that the embassies do more than simply represent their own countries in China, they are also a good source of business. The first embassy area in Jianguomen made the Friendship Store a landmark place for shopping in the 1980s; and the second embassy area helped develop the business atmosphere from Dongzhimen to Nongzhanguan, including the popular Sanlitun bar district. Compared with

Maizidian Goes Cosmopolitan



Photo Provided by Maizidian Neighborhood Committee

Jianguomen and Dongzhimen, Maizidian has better traffic conditions, and is closer to the airport and Olympic stadiums.

An analysis by Beijing International Economic and Trade Research Institute says that an international community will attract more foreign investment and promote the local service industry.

At the same time, the research suggests that there is too little interaction between expatriates and local residents. Relatively few foreigners live in local residential apartments, and most of the expatriates who live in expensive apartments are almost totally isolated from the Chinese community.

“The difference in consumption ability between Chinese residents and expatriates who live here is still great,” said Xing Xiurong of Maizidian neighborhood committee, “Most expatriates that work in the area have a company paid allowance for living in an upscale apartment, which most local residents can't afford.”

However she stressed that the concept of an international community was rooted in the basic sense of the word “community,” meaning a place where people can get to know each other, make friends, and help each other, and did not mean

‘Maizidian is the first and most pervasive impression of Beijing and China for many foreigners. It's important to build it into an international standard area.’

a place only for foreigners.

“Our international community does not separate the poor from the rich. They are both the residents in the community and we're hoping the international facilities here can serve the local residents well too.”

According to the research, 23 percent local residents have been abroad; 87 percent residents are willing to live in an international community; 88 percent do not

think Maizidian is an international community now; 98 percent of local residents don't know foreigners.

The research also shows that there is a need for improved bi-lingual services in the area, including restaurant menus, street signs and information counters. At present there are bilingual signs in 20 percent of the shopping malls and 71 percent of the restaurants offer bilingual menus.

Mistakes, however, are hard to avoid. On the street where the Maizidian neighborhood committee is located, the word “Census” on a billboard advertising the China Economic Census board is misspelled as “Cincus.”

On the street by the Maizidian neighborhood committee,

the newspaper vendor in front of Zaoyingli Xiaoqu told *Beijing Today*, “I have no idea about whether Maizidian area is going to become an international community, and we do not have any English newspapers.”

The response was much the same from the proprietor of a fruit shop on Nongzhanguan Beilu when asked if she knew what was meant by the term “international community.” She asked another young woman working there if she had heard of such a thing. “No!” was the response.

Just at that moment, a customer, holding a coke can in his hand, asked, “Could you give me a cold one, please?”

“Sorry, summer's over! We don't have cold drinks,” the owner said.

If they hope to compete with the growing number of stores such as Jenny Lou's and April Gourmet, which cater almost exclusively to foreign residents, local vendors will have to learn that both foreigners and savvy, upwardly mobile locals never drink room-temperature coke!

This is a point that Zhu Mingying, a popular singer in the 1980s, and now president of C&M International Arts Education Center, well understands.

Zhu, who has lived in the US for 10 years and in the Maizidian area for seven years, has been very active in building Maizidian international community. She told *Beijing Today* that building an international community needs the understanding of local residents and a key requirement is helping local people in the service industry understand the needs of both foreigners and locals.

She also pointed out that many of the foreigners who live in Maizidian also work and do most of their socializing here. “Maizidian is the first and most pervasive impression of Beijing and China for many foreigners. It's important to build it into an international standard area.”

To her, building an international community is not just a matter of surface appearance, “We have to perfect the details.”

And the details are never-ending, from bus stop locations, which should not be right under the window of an expensive apartment building; and the skills a housekeeper should have; to the way fruit should be arranged in a fruit store, what kinds of foreign publications a newsstand should sell, and what brands of cigarettes a shop should stock.

Francois Magni, who works for Deloitte & Touche Corporate Finance, told *Beijing Today*, “I have not heard anything about an international community. I like living in my local Chinese neighborhood, and would not move outside the second ring road even you paid me! To me, Maizidian is just a place to buy bread, cheese and alcohol. We go to Suzzie Wong and the Black Sun bar to drink, shop at Jenny Lou's and have pasta at Annie's.”



Xinhua Photo

Schumacher Ignites F1 Fever in Shanghai

By Ming Xin

It seemed only Michael Schumacher and red-hot Ferrari could give China a real thrill at the upcoming inaugural Formula One event this Sunday in Shanghai, an alien territory for one of the most glamorous sports in the world.

As the big day draws closer, the festival atmosphere is palpable in downtown Shanghai with F1 stories flooding the media.

Schumacher made his first public appearance in Shanghai at a press conference on Wednesday, after keeping local media and fans guessing for a couple of days.

“It's not really a surprise to see so much support from Chinese fans. The Formula One championship is a worldwide event,” Schumacher said.

As the second new event added to this year's Formula One schedule, the race is a landmark for Formula One.

With China's population of 1.3 billion, the race offers

a big opportunity for Formula One teams and their sponsors to break into the biggest market on earth.

The 5.4-kilometer track, designed by the prolific Hermann Tilke of Germany, was built at a cost of US \$320 million, according to the latest reports.

Whether local citizens will embrace the race is another story. China has no car racing tradition to speak of, and ticket prices ranged from 370 yuan (about 45 US dollars) to 3,700 yuan (450 dollars), a considerable sum for most Chinese.

Organizers say the 15,000 tickets to the race have already sold out, with 20 percent purchased by overseas fans.

Practice starts today, with qualifying time trials to be held Saturday afternoon. The race itself gets underway at 2 pm Sunday, with Ferrari's Schumacher, who has won 12 of this year's 15 races, the firm favorite to take the crown in China's first Grand Prix.

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Free Personal Classifieds

Beijing Today is launching a free personal classifieds service. For sale and wanted ads, situations wanted and vacant, language exchange and personals, and rentals will be

printed free of charge. Email your personal classifieds (in English and Chinese) to info@ynet.com. Personal classifieds should conform to relevant laws and regulations.

International Standard Set for Corruption and Bribery

By Chu Meng

The first international standard and authoritative definitions for the crimes of corruption and bribery have been set at the 17th International Congress of Penal Law, held at the Great Hall of the People from September 12 to 19.

Professor Cherif Bassiouni, president of the AIDP said at the closing ceremony, "Resolutions we made in this congress will be submitted to the United Nations and kept on

file. They are going to serve as a reference while making other international laws and regulations from now on."

The definition described a civil servant as a career employee working for a government department at any level, or administrators working for legislation, execution and administration agencies. Workers in non-government bodies and enterprises may also be classed as civil servants as long as those bodies

were under the control of the government.

Corruption of a civil servant refers to the act or process of the dishonest and improper use of one's own power or position, to reap illegal benefits, especially money and being morally wicked. The definition of bribery is to influence the behavior or judgment of a civil servant in a special position of power or trust unfairly or illegally by offering him or her favors or gifts.

Zhao Bingzhi, vice-president of Renmin University's School of Law said at the closing ceremony of the congress, "this international standard is coherent with China's anti-corruption policy. And in order to achieve this goal, government departments at all levels should enhance operational transparency and responsibility."

Cherif Bassiouni also said, "Anti-corruption is an international task. Thus, countries throughout the world should work together and abide by the same standard to fight against this crime, especially crimes of trans-national corruption and bribery. While great progress has been achieved in the development of international criminal justice, more international co-operation is required."

Tax Evasion Costs 4.2 Billion Loss

By Chu Meng

Figures released by the National Bureau of Statistics last weekend revealed a loss of 4.2 billion yuan from tax evasion by state owned and non state owned enterprises.

The figures cover 788 enterprises during the period from September 2002 to September 2003. Of the 788 surveyed enterprises, 100 evaded tax totaling 1.43 billion yuan through improper accounting and lodging false declarations, and a further 169 taxpayers avoided 2.76 billion yuan due to the inefficiency of local taxation departments.

The figures resulted from strict examinations of 788 enterprises who have sound fiscal administrations and 90 percent of which have an annual income of above 1 million yuan, accounting for about 20 percent of national total annual tax income. The survey was conducted by 17 special working groups of NBS officials and experts targeting 35 major taxation departments in 17 provinces all over China.

Most of those improperly-operated departments blamed pressure to acquire fixed amounts annually for tax on local enterprises for their shortcomings. Figures showed that 364 enterprises, 46.1 percent of the 788, had this kind of problem.

To rectify the situation, the NBS suggested improvements should be made to the national assessment system of enterprise's finance conditions and the establishment of a rigid mechanism of obligation for taxation departments at all levels.



Two drilling teams converge between Dongsi and Dengshikou Wednesday morning to complete the 17th section of the tunnel for the No. 5 subway line.
Photo by Cai Daizheng

CBRC Regulatory Fees Introduced

By James Liu

China's banking regulator, the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC) has started levying regulatory fees on financial institutions.

As of Monday, commercial banks, credit unions, trust investment companies, postal saving institutions, financial assets management companies and other financial institutions will pay the regulatory fees every June and November.

The fees are intended to help push institutions to scrutinize the work of the regulator and "promote the realization of effective banking regula-

tions," a CBRC spokesman said at a news conference last Sunday held to officially introduce the new fees.

The fees consist of two parts: institution regulatory fees and operation regulatory fees. Institutional regulatory fees will be 0.08 percent of the paid-in capital of the supervised institutions, while the operation regulatory fees will be levied at 0.02 percent of their total assets for those holding less than 3 trillion yuan in assets.

Supervised institutions with assets worth between 3 and 4 trillion yuan will pay regulatory fees of 0.015 per-

cent on the assets. Those with assets between 4 trillion yuan and 5 trillion yuan, the CBRC charges 0.01 percent for the assets and institutions do not have to pay for the part in excess of five trillion yuan.

The larger Chinese commercial banks will pay a higher level of fees than their US counterparts of similar sizes pay to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), which regulates and supervises US national banks, but the smaller banks, including foreign banks operating here, will pay less than their US counterparts, the CBRC said.

Real Estate Prices Surge 13.5%

By Chu Meng

China's real estate prices continued to grow during the first eight months of this year, with the average housing price hitting 2,749 yuan per square meter, an increase of 13.5 percent over the same period last year, and 6.9 percent over the number of the first quarter this year. The figures were released in a report on China's current housing market by the Ministry of Construction Monday.

Figures also showed that average prices of commercial housing nationwide had

reached about 2,500 yuan per quarter, an 11.2 percent jump over the same period last year. Meanwhile the unit price was up 15 percent, 14.7 percent and 7.7 percent 3,421 yuan respectively in the eastern, central and western regions of China in the first eight months of last year.

"The price rise is stimulated by booming market demands and limited investment tools. China's surging real estate prices should be closely monitored," said Chang Xiuzhe, a researcher with the Macro Economy Research Institute

of the State Development and Reform Commission in a Xinhua interview Tuesday.

According to ministry officials' analysis, there were five factors contributing to the phenomenon: a sharp decline of economical housing, shortage of middle-and-low price housing in some cities, temporary over supply of high-grade commercial real estate in certain areas, ill-directed promotions by some developers and increasing land and construction materials costs due to the cooling-down economic policies introduced early this year.

Anti-monopoly Office Opens

By Chu Meng

The Ministry of Commerce opened an anti-monopoly investigation bureau Sunday. The director of the newly established office, Shang Ming, told media at the launch ceremony last Sunday that the office will be responsible for international exchanges on anti-monopoly and monopoly-related investigations.

The establishment of the office aims to bring order

to the market in order to protect consumers' interests and ensure fair competition. It was revealed at the press that curbing monopoly is a new responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce.

A draft of the new anti-monopoly law has been submitted to the legislative affairs office of the State Council. Moreover, introducing anti-monopoly legislation has been put on the agenda of the 10th National People's Congress.

Wang Xiaoye, a specialist in anti-monopoly legislation from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said in an interview with *China Daily* last Friday, "China's entry to the WTO, which brought in many transnational corporations, has pushed the country to speed up its anti-monopoly legislation. The adoption of an anti-monopoly law will serve as an important tool for China to check the influence of multinationals."

Legislation Targets Disposal of Electronic Waste

By Chu Meng

A draft regulation governing the disposal of electronic waste, which aims at regulating the operation of the country's electronic waste recycling work, was released by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) on its official web site (www.sdpc.gov.cn) last Friday.

According to a document on the website, electronic waste, or e-waste, refers to home electronic appliances such as computers, washing machines, refrigerators, televisions and air-conditioners, which have outlived their service period. At present, the draft is waiting for collective public opinions and will be submitted to the State Council by the end of October.

Lai Yun, project leader of research institute of e-waste recycling from the international environmental protection organization Greenpeace told *Beijing Today* Wednesday, "Chinese authorities actually began the process of legislating the management of electronic garbage three years ago, but the legislation was bogged down and delayed by disagreements between manufacturers, government agencies and consumer groups on how to split the bill for the disposal of these products."

He said that China has huge production and consumption capacities of electronic appliances, pointing out that during 2003, a total of 182 million units were produced, while an estimated 28 million units reached the end of their usable life span and were due to be disposed of.

US Grant Supports Power Project in Shanxi

By Sun Yongjian

The US Trade and Development Agency awarded a \$500,000 grant Wednesday to the Shanxi Jincheng Anthracite Coal Mining Group to fund a technical assistance program on the development of a 120 megawatt power plant that runs on coal bed methane and coal mine methane, sources from the US embassy announced yesterday.

An embassy news release says the grant demonstrates the agency's ongoing commitment to assist China in enhancing its power generation capacity using environmentally friendly methods.

The technical assistance supports one part of a much larger program that includes improved production of coal mine methane via in-mine drilling, coal bed methane production from new surface wells, and transmission and distribution systems for commercial, residential, and industrial end users.

Tax Relief Offered to Chip Exporters

By Chu Meng

In an effort to stimulate China's domestic integrated chip industry and reduce dependence on imported chips, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) China will reduce export tax on products including chips by 13 percent tax rebate, an announcement on its web site revealed Tuesday.

According to the document, semiconductor chips are widely used in everyday life, and are essential to the development of China's high-tech sector. Such chips are used in telecommunication and computer equipment as well as a wide range of consumer goods such as DVD and VCD players.

Earlier this year, China had agreed to abolishing a 17 percent tax rebate to some domestic chip producers whose products were mainly sold on the home market, in order to solve a trade dispute with the US.

Northeast Facing Reform on VAT System

By Wei Lixin

A reform of the value-added tax (VAT) system is to be launched in north-east China, according to a regulation released jointly by the Ministry of Finance and State Administration of Taxation Tuesday.

The regulation relates to expanding the deductible scope of VAT input tax within eight fixed industries, including equipment manufacturing and petrochemical processing. According to the regulation, taxpayers whose sales amount to over 50 percent of the whole industry qualify for the preferential tax rate.

Under the regulation, the three northeast provinces - Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang - will shift from the current production-based VAT system to a consumption-based VAT system, which will help to reduce their tax burden and further fuel the economy.

Currently, fixed assets such as equipment and machinery are classified as consumption goods and are subject to VAT tax, on which companies may not claim tax deductions. This places a heavy burden on enterprises wanting to increase their fixed assets investment, especially those traditional heavy industries in the north-east provinces.

The implementation of the new VAT tax system in the three provinces will reduce central financial income by 10 billion yuan. If the system was adopted nationwide, the figure will reach 100 billion yuan.

Beijing Qualifies as 'Auto Society'

By Wei Lixin

The total number of privately owned automobiles in Beijing has reached 1 million, Beijing Municipal Statistics Bureau announced Monday.

Over the past two decades Beijing has experienced a gradual transition from a "city of bicycles" to a "city of cars," with the total sales volume of cars currently increasing at a monthly rate of 38,000.

According to the Development Research Center of the State Council, when the number of families with private cars reaches 10 to 20 percent of the total number in a country, the country could be termed an "auto society." In Beijing, the figure has already reached 19 percent.

The statistics also revealed that the GDP of Beijing reached 366.31 billion in 2003, compared to just 0.788 billion in 1952, which equates to an annual growth rate averaging 10.6 percent over the 51-year period, while total economic volume has increased 171-fold.

The current per-capita GDP, which is an important measurement of the standard of wealth, has increased from 170 yuan in 1952 to over 32,000 yuan in 2003.

Recruitment Launched for UN Civil Servants

By Chu Meng

The Ministry of Personnel began recruiting UN civil servants Monday, while an examination to select candidates for reserve forces of UN civil servants also started registration on the ministry's website (www.mop.gov.cn).

The public selection examination is scheduled for November 21. Those who qualify will constitute a reserve force of UN civil servants, and be eligible to take a final competitive test and simultaneous interpretation test in February 2005. Successful candidates will then become official UN employees.

The six subjects for the final test are administration, finance, humanitarian affairs, human rights, public information, social affairs and Chinese-language interpreters.

International civil servants are employees who work for the United Nations and other international units, under the leadership of the international units.

Construction Bank Sets Up Shareholding Company

By Sun Yongjian

China Construction Bank, one of the four state-owned commercial banks, announced on Tuesday in Beijing the establishment of its shareholding company, which has taken over more than 99 percent of the bank's assets and all of its 270,000 staff. Chang Zhenming, new president of the company, said at the Tuesday press conference that the central government would no longer put money towards tackling the bank's non-performing loans.

Zhou Xiaochuan, president of the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, confirmed the same day that the Chinese government was stopping all previous efforts to provide financial assistance so state-owned commercial banks could lighten their bad loan burdens, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

Central authorities invested \$45 billion in cash in Construction Bank and the Bank of China in January to help them improve their capital adequacy ratios.

The shareholding company had five major investors – Central Huijin Investment Co., Baosteel Co., State Grid Corporation of China, China Yangtze Power Co., and China Jianyin Investment – a news release on the bank's website revealed.

Song Fengming, a professor at Tsinghua University, and Masamoto Yashiro, chairman of the board of Japan's Shinsei Bank, have been named independent directors of the new firm.

Chang Zhenming said the bank

was looking to invite more accounting experts to assume independent director positions.

The board of directors of the shareholding company consisted of five committees in charge of strategic development, auditing, risk management, salary payments and transaction control, the *Beijing News* reported on Tuesday.

Construction Bank's capital adequacy ratio reached 8.17 percent by the end of June, mostly through the issuing of 15 billion yuan of subordinated debts in August. The bank's risk-resistance abilities have been boosted with the injection of 8 billion yuan into the shareholding company's core assets, Chang said.

The bank would definitely list on the Hong Kong stock market, though specific timing had not been decided, he told the *People's Daily* newspaper on Tuesday.

Insurers' Funds Stuck in Securities Firms

By Sun Yongjian

More than 800 million yuan of insurance companies' assets are trapped within the accounts of securities firms suspected of legal violations and poor management and there is little hope the insurers will get their money back, the *Beijing Times* reported on September 18.

The Hong Kong listed PICC Property and Casualty Company announced through the website of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on September 10 that 413.4 million yuan of its funds, including 356.5 million yuan of national bonds and nearly 57 million yuan in cash, was stuck in an account with Shenzhen city-based Hantang Securities and could not be taken back because Hantang had suspended payment of transaction funds to institution customers.

After being charged with seriously violating China's securities laws, Hantang was entrusted to the China Cinda Assets Management Company on September 3.

China Life, another Hong Kong-listed domestic insurance giant, revealed in its mid-year report than Fujian province-based Minfa Securities had refused to return 446 million yuan of its national bonds due to "management problems".

Rival insurer Xinhua Life, scrambling to prepare for its domestic initial public offering, was involved in a creditor's rights crisis over as much as 600 million yuan of funds with the Shanghai branch of Southern Securities. That securities firm was taken over by the China Securities Regulatory Commission in January due to fiscal and administrative mismanagement, *Shanghai Securities* reported on January 4.

The legality of entrusting management of assets to securities companies is a matter of debate in academic and business circles in China.

An employee of the administrative office of PICC Property and Casualty Company surnamed Xiong told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that the company's cooperation with Hantang Securities did not constitute entrusted assets management. China Life stressed a similar point in its announcement.

However, professor Hao Yansu, the dean of the Insurance Department of the Central University of Finance and Economics, said both insurers were involved in entrusted assets management, which he said was not a safe choice for insurance businesses.

"Insurance companies have to choose safe and reliable companies to minimize risks when entrusting their assets to others' management," Hao said.



Sixth International Fruits Fair Opens

A Great Wall of apples spells out their Chinese name, *pingguo*, at the Sixth International Fruits Fair in Yantai, Shandong Province on Thursday. Representatives of more than 40 countries and regions are participating in the ongoing event. (Xinhua Photo)

Three "Viagras" Vying for Market Share

By Sun Yongjian

Coming shortly on the heels of the overturning of the patent for Viagra in this country, the domestic market for erectile dysfunction medications is bracing for the arrival of two new foreign competitors that recently received sales licenses from Chinese authorities.

Viagra, produced by US-based pharmaceutical company Pfizer, was previously licensed for sale in domestic retail drug shops by the State Food And Drug Administration (SFDA), the *Beijing Times* reported on Tuesday.

A source from Pfizer did not reveal when the over-the-counter version of the drug would be available, where it would be sold or what price it would carry when speaking with *Beijing Today* by telephone on Tuesday.

Viagra used to be available only

at certain hospitals, but many people were unwilling to see their doctors to receive the drugs out of a feeling of embarrassment or a wish to protect their privacy, Professor Fu Shiheng, vice chairman of the China Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine, was quoted as saying by the *Beijing Times*.

Germany-based Bayer pharmaceutical announced last Saturday that its Viagra competitor, called Levitra, had been licensed for sale



Levitra is set to hit the market.

by the SFDA on the domestic market at a price of \$17 to \$19 per dose. The drug would first be introduced at hospitals as a prescription medicine and the price had been reported to relevant authorities and was expected to receive approval in November, the company said.

Bayer materials state Levitra takes effect within 10 to 25 minutes of consumption.

Lilly ICOS, another American pharmaceutical firm also eyeing the Chinese market, was set to launch its erectile dysfunction pill Cialis by the end of the year, Sunday's *Beijing Times* reported.

At least 40 million men in Chinese cities suffer from impotence, and the total market potential for erectile dysfunction drugs in China could be as high as 60 billion yuan, the *Beijing Times* said.

Appliance Retailer's Rankings Stir Controversy

By Wei Lixin

The Chongqing branch of Suning Alliance, a major domestic chain of home appliance retailers, last Saturday released a second ranking of its best selling flat television brands, just one week after the publication of its first such ranking became a subject of controversy.

Last week, Suning's Beijing and Chongqing branches separately released their own lists of the best selling brands of color television, refrigerators, air conditioners and washing machines based on aggregate sales data collected from chain stores between January and August this year.

It was the first time for a domestic appliance retailer to release such sales information, traditionally considered corporate secrets. The lists were issued on the eve of the seven-day National Day holiday, also known as "golden week", and thereby created a stir as the domestic appliance industry geared up for major sales promotions during the normally lucrative period.

Top spot on the color television rankings for Beijing went to Shenzhen-based Skyworth, followed by LG and TCL. Long-time television power player Changhong took a lowly seventh, while major foreign brands Sony, Hitachi and Sharp failed to make the grade.

Changhong was among the brands to take issue with the reports. Wang Yong, a manager from Changhong's marketing department argued his company kept its own regular sales statistics, which indicated Changhong deserved a higher rating in the Beijing market, the *Beijing Times* said on Tuesday. Suning's list could have some effect on future sales of Changhong televisions in Beijing, Wang was quoted as saying.

The Gome chain, Suning's main rival in the domestic appliance retail market, issued a statement that Suning's list was not a comprehensive look at appliance sales in Beijing. Gome was considering generating its own sales rankings with the assistance of authorita-

tive statistics organizations, the company said.

Many media reports have predicted that some appliance makers, concerned their rankings could influence consumers' choices, could move to raise their spots by offering discounts on certain models and push sales during the "golden week". Analysts have been quoted as saying that Suning may have deliberately timed the release of the rankings to pressure manufacturers into slashing prices.

"Every weekend, Suning releases weekly sales rankings in *Beijing Star Daily*, and they have never drawn much attention. So we never expected the first eight month-based ranking would create such a sensation and generate so many rumors," an employee from Suning's marketing department told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday on condition her name not be used.

"Considering the market's strong reaction, it is unclear whether Suning will release more long-term appliance sales rankings."

Carmaker Disperses IPO Rumors

By Sun Yongjian

Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC) will not hold its initial public offering overseas this year, or even next year, SAIC Chairman of the Board Chen Xianglin announced Sunday at a World Industry and Commerce Association in Beijing, the *Beijing Times* reported that day.

It was the company's first response to rumors flying since July that SAIC was geared to launch an IPO in Hong Kong and New York in January 2005.

Rumors held that the carmaker expected to attract \$6 billion through the offering and line up such major international financial institutions as the Bank of China International (China), Deutsche Bundes Bank, Merrill Lynch Securities and Morgan Stanley as underwriters.

The central government's macroeconomic controls have had a strong impact on the domestic auto industry, triggering a fierce price war among automakers and prompting the delay of any moves to go public, Chen said.

Xu Xiang, an analyst for China Southern Securities Co. predicted it would take SAIC another one to two years to complete preparations for an IPO.

China Southern Airlines Launches Local Strategy

By Sun Yongjian

China Southern Airlines, which controls more than 30 percent of the domestic civil aviation market, made an aggressive bid for a larger market stake through the release of its Beijing strategy on Monday.

The same day, the No.1 Aviation Station Building, a multi-functional waiting hall specifically established by China Southern, entered operation at Capital International Airport, Li Jun, general manager of Beijing China Southern Ground Service Company told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

The company's strategy called for making Beijing Capital Airport a pivotal hub for linking a triangular network between Urumqi in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, Shenyang in northeastern Liaoning Province and Guangzhou in southern Guangdong Province, Li said.

Another part of the strategy called for China Southern to increase its scheduled flights from Beijing to 1,500 from 1,192 by early next year and open more than 10 new domestic routes, he added.

Fifth Chaoyang Business Festival Successful

By Chu Meng

The Fifth Beijing Chaoyang International Business Festival closed Sunday. More than 150 domestic enterprises, 40 commercial counselors and 50 multinational corporations participated in the five-day Commercial Counselors Summit on Investment Promotion part of the festival and signed 46 contracts worth a total of 5.85 billion yuan.

Aside from more traditional business projects, infrastructure construction projects related to traffic and landscape management were focuses of attention.

A major topic of discussion throughout the event was the development plan of Beijing's Central Business District, or CBD. The total construction area of the CBD will reach 10 million square meters, with office buildings accounting for 50 percent of that space, according to figures released during the festival. Plans call for the completion of eight million square meters of construction in the CBD by 2008.

Nestlé to Get More Milk from Inner Mongolia

By Wei Lixin

Nestlé Group, the world's largest food and beverage company, announced it was further expanding its activities in China's milk market last Wednesday. Responding to strong and growing demand for its milk products, Nestle was developing a new dairy base in Erguna, Hulunbeir City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to ensure supplies of fresh milk, the company said.

Nestlé currently operates two domestic dairy factories, one in Shuangcheng, Heilongjiang province started in 1990, and another in Laixi, Shandong province established in 1996. It runs a total of 20 factories in China and employs more than 10,000 people.

The Switzerland-based company has already reached an agreement with Erguna Meilu Milk Industry Company to buy its dairy factory in Erguna.

Nestlé planned to upgrade the factory to give it a processing capacity of seven million tons of fresh milk per day by 2007 and 10 million tons by 2010, and total investment in the dairy base would surpass 500 million yuan, according to the business news website www.icxo.com last Friday.

As it has done in Shuangcheng and Laixi, Nestlé would provide technical assistance to local dairy farmers to help them improve the quantity and quality of their milk while keeping costs low, and then buy their milk through long-term agreements, the company said.

Flight Delay Insurance Takes Off

By Wei Lixin

AIU Insurance Co. on Tuesday enacted China's first insurance clauses covering compensation for flight delays, the *Beijing News* reported Wednesday.

AIU policy held that passengers delayed for more than six hours by bad weather, mechanical problems, strikes or hijacking could receive 300 yuan to 1,800 yuan (\$36 to \$210) in compensation for every six hours of waiting, the newspaper said.

The policy did not cover holdups caused by problems with flight schedules or conveyance services, it said.

Individual flight delay insurance policies only applied to international flights, and policies that covered both domestic and international flights were available to businesses, not individual customers, it said.

Premier Hopes Russia Chooses Chinese Route for Pipeline

Moscow, September 22 (AFP) – China’s Premier Wen Jiabao voiced hope that Russia would choose a route to China for a crucial Siberian pipeline now in the works, the Interfax News Agency reported.

“We are convinced that whatever the pipeline’s layout, Russia’s government and companies would give first priority to the Chinese route since China is the most stable market for Russia’s oil and gas,” Wen said in an interview before his visit Thursday to Russia.

“Before the pipeline is built, we would like to step up supplies of Russian oil, bringing them up to 15 million tons in 2006,” the premier added.

The construction of an oil pipeline giving energy-thirsty China access to Siberian oil will be one of the main topics for the prime minister’s talks in Moscow, China’s Ambassador in Russia Liu Guchang said earlier.

China has strongly lobbied for a pipeline carrying Russian oil from Siberia to the Chinese territory but Moscow is believed to be leaning towards a rival pipeline that would run to Nakhodka on the Sea of Japan.

China, a net importer of petroleum products



Vice-premier Wu Yi (left) met her Russian counterpart, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov, in Moscow to pave the way for the meeting between the premiers of the two countries.

since 1993 and of crude oil since 1996, is reliant on overseas producers for one-third of its supplies and, in turn, accounts for about 7 percent of the world’s oil demand.

Local Report:

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s visit to Russia will strengthen friendly relations and enhance energy cooperation between China and Russia, said Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui at a news briefing last Friday.

Li said Russia proposed a cooperation with China on an oil pipeline in 1994, and the two sides have done a lot of preparatory work since then.

As the oil pipeline remains in the blueprint stage, China and Russia have been conducting energy cooperation via railway transportation, Li said, adding that China, a large and stable market, needs oil and gas greatly, and it provides a solid foundation for energy cooperation with Russia. Li said China and Russia also share common interests in fighting international terrorism since the two countries are both victims of terror.

Sino-Russian trade has been on the rise in recent years. Trade volume hit \$15.7 billion in 2003 and \$11.7 billion in the first seven months this year.

– Xinhua News Agency, Beijing, September 17

(Wei Lixin)

Japan’s 2Q GDP Revised Downward

Tokyo, September 10, (Reuters) – Japan revised downward its second-quarter economic growth Friday to 0.3 percent from an initial estimate of 0.4 percent, defying widespread expectations for an upward revision and sending the yen and stocks lower.

Economists said there was little cause for alarm, noting a surprisingly large fall in public investment as the government tries to rein in its ballooning budget deficit.

But looking ahead, some questioned the strength of Japan’s economic recovery after having seen softer data for July in recent weeks.

On an annualized basis, gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 1.3 percent, compared to the initial estimate of 1.7 percent, the Cabinet Office said. It was the fifth consecutive quarter of growth.

But the pace of expansion slowed from 6.4 percent annualized for January-March and was lower than the US growth of 2.8 percent for the April-June quarter.

The revised GDP data showed capital spending for the quarter rose 1.2 percent from January-March, weaker than economists’ median forecast of a 2.7-percent increase.

Financial markets were surprised by the downward revision.

Economic data for July, which will feed into the next GDP report, has shown signs of a slowdown in some key areas that had been behind Japan’s robust economic growth during the past year.

Analyst’s Take:

Although Japan has revised down its second-quarter GDP growth at a considerable level, Japan’s economic recovery is still on its way.

After the 10-year recession, Japan experienced a slow but firm recovery. The annualized GDP growth from 2001 to 2004 remains at a rate of 2-3 percent, that is to say, the quarterly growth is 0.7-0.8 percent. Then, why has the last quarter growth declined so sharply to only 0.3 percent?

To solve the problem, we should analyze the four key factors contributing to Japan’s economic growth: public investment, exports, domestic enterprise equipment investment and private consumption. Among the four factors, private consumption contributes the most to economic growth at a level of 60 percent, while exports are at 20 percent; the two remaining factors contribute 10 percent to the total growth separately. During the last quarter, though the public investment is at the same level as the first quarter and exports are going strong, the slack private consumption and enterprise equipment investment bring about a negative impact on the economy, which outdoes the positive impact – so the growth rate sees a significant downward trend.

What’s more, since 2004, the Japan Central Bank, Japan government and the cabinet have estimated that the future of Japan’s economic growth is not so clear and is experiencing a stagnancy, which also contributes to the downward revision.

– Zhang Zheng, vice professor, School of Economics, Peking University

(Wei Lixin)



2004 Berlin Communications Expo Drops Curtain

(Xinhua Photo)

Fewer Zeros for Won

Seoul, September 20, (Korea Herald) – The debate on currency reform has shifted from printing new 50,000-won and 100,000-won bills to slashing two or three zeros off the Korean currency. This welcome transition was made when Lee Hun-jai, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, said recently it is time to study the proposal for denomination in earnest.

Few dispute the need for 50,000-won and 100,000-won bills. Price increases have reduced the value of the 10,000-won bill to less than one-tenth when first issued in 1973. On the other hand, the nation’s economy has since grown manifold, rendering 10,000 won all the more inadequate as the highest-denomination bill.

But one problem about the idea of printing 50,000 and 100,000 bills now is that they will become useless in several years. Given the anticipated rates of inflation and economic growth, the nation will have to start using “quadrillion” as a monetary counting unit to describe its economic activities in four to five years. A solution to this problem is to cut off two to three zeros through re-denomination.

Therefore, it is a reasonable pro-

posal to put up with the inconvenience of not having the proposed new bills for a while and issue their equivalents in value at the time of re-denomination, which will make bookkeeping, data processing and financial settlements easier and speedier. That is like killing two birds with one stone.

Analyst’s Take:

Firstly, the currency reform would provide more convenience for both foreigners and South Korean people. China, in the 1950s and some other countries like Germany after World War II also had the similar experience of a big currency union, which has been changed. Although maintaining the currency stability is every government’s aim, only a few countries like the United States can maintain their monetary unit unchanged over a long period.

Secondly, the new currency will benefit the emerging new Asian monetary system. Since World War II, the US dollar has become the dominant currency of international trade and until the birth of the EU. To seize a better position on the new international stage, Asia has no choice but to set up its own economic and monetary union in the

region as quickly as possible just like the EU and North America. To take the first step, a tightened economic and monetary integration between China, South Korea and Japan should become the top priority among their governments.

Finally, it may be reasonable to regard the current South Korean reform as one scene of acts in this grand Asian drama. Gunnar Myrdal, a famous Swedish economist, published a book entitled Asian Drama 50 Years Ago, analyzing the poverty and future of the south Asian nations.

I think “Asian drama” is a perfect term describing modern Asia. And just look at what we have observed in the past half century: the Vietnam War in the 1950s and ‘60s, the emerging of Japan’s economic power in the ‘70s, the “Four Tigers” of the ‘80s and the success story of economic reforms in China in the ‘90s. Of course, the region also has experienced a severe currency crisis in ‘97-’98, and many economies, including South Korea, have been damaged severely.

– Jia Baohua, Professor of University of International Business and Economics

(Wei Lixin)

China Finance Chiefs to Join G7 Meeting for First Time

Washington, September 22 (AFP) – Group of Seven finance ministers and central bankers will be joined by representatives from China for the first time at the G7 October 1 meeting in Washington, a US official said.

John Taylor, US Treasury under the secretary for international affairs, called the Chinese participation “historic.”

He said China’s participation in those meetings is a “natural occurrence,” as China is becoming an increasingly important component of the global economy, which he characterized as “in a remarkably good situation right now.”

Officials from the United States and other major industrialized countries have recently expressed a desire to include China at the G7 gatherings.

The regularly scheduled G7 meetings of finance ministers and central bankers provide a forum for discussing policy cooperation and also play a crucial role in shaping foreign-exchange levels.

Russia, which has been invited to G7 discussions since the country’s 1998 debt crisis, will not attend the G7 dinner with Chinese officials in October, Taylor noted.

US Fed Raises Interest Rates to 1.75%

London, September 22, (FT.com) – The Federal Reserve has again raised its interest rates by 25 basis points, bringing the Fed funds rate to 1.75 percent.

The Fed has now raised rates in each of its last three meetings.

The move was widely expected and most economists believe that rates will reach 2 percent by the end of the year.

But the economic impact of Fed tightening has been partly offset in recent months by a fall in long-term interest rates. Since June, the yield on the 10-year bond has fallen from 4.87 to 4.08 percent, reflecting market concerns about the strength of the economy.

“It has been very unusual for bonds to rally at the start of a Fed-rate tightening cycle,” said Gerard MacDonell, a bond economist at JP Morgan Fleming Asset Management. “We usually only see it when the market sniffs the end of a rate cycle.”

Microsoft Opens Office to Governments

California, September 20, (Newsfactor) – Microsoft is opening the door to its Office suite, offering governments a closer look inside key applications.

This expansion of the software giant’s Government Security Program (GSP) addresses security and compatibility concerns by granting access to some Office 2003 source code. It adds to the existing GSP Windows source offering and the availability of Office 2003 XML reference schemes announced last year.

The Government Shared Source License for Office gives qualifying national governments and international organizations access to code and technical details about Office 2003.

Participating governments and organizations can review the source code for Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook applications, along with shared applications, such as draw and search.

Participants also may visit Microsoft’s development facilities in Redmond, Washington, and review various aspects of Windows and Office source-code development.

To date, some 34 countries, including Australia, China, Norway, Russia, Spain and the United Kingdom, have signed GSP agreements. Government agencies from more than 60 countries are eligible for participation.

Greece: Public Deficit Figures from 2000-2002 Underestimated

Athens, September 22 (AFP) – The Greek government acknowledged that the country’s annual public deficit estimates from 2000 to 2002 had been sharply underestimated, a revelation described by the European Central Bank head as “an enormous problem.”

Economy Minister George Alogoskufis told parliament that the shortfall came to 4.1 percent of output in 2000 rather than the 2 percent announced at the time.

While the deficits in 2001 and 2002 were put at 1.4 percent in the two years, they, in fact, had come to 3.7 percent, he added.

The revised figures are well in excess of the 3-percent public-deficit ceiling imposed on euro-zone members.

The figures were revised upwards following an audit of public finances ordered by the conservative government after it replaced a Socialist administration last March, the minister told parliament.

But government spokesman Theodore Russopoulos stressed that the change would not call into question Greece’s adhesion to the eurozone in 2001. Eurozone candidates are obliged to show that they have reined in public spending before they can qualify for membership.

“We took over a difficult economic situation and we will succeed” in turning it around, he told a press conference.

Earlier Wednesday, European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet described the revision to the Greek deficit as “an enormous problem.”

Tobacco Giants Turn Over New Leaf in \$280b Trial

Washington (AFP), September 20 – US tobacco giants facing a lawsuit seeking a \$280-billion penalty denied charges they lied about health risks, arguing that since 1998 they have warned the public smoking is dangerous.

“There is no such thing as a safe cigarette, be it labeled ‘low tar’ or ‘lights.’ We sell a dangerous product,” said Ted Wells, co-counsel for Philip Morris USA.

On the second day of the tobacco trial, lawyers for industry leaders

said the companies do not aim to hide the fact cigarettes are dangerous, and they stressed that the industry must be judged on its behavior now.

“As of today, each and every defendant says to the public in a clear and unambiguous way that smoking is dangerous and causes disease,” Wells said.

In the largest-ever US civil racketeering case, the government accused tobacco companies of colluding for five decades to hide the

health hazards of smoking, marketing directly to teenagers and lying by suggesting the relative safety of “light” cigarettes.

Defendants include Philip Morris USA; RJ Reynolds Tobacco; Loews Corp’s Lorillard Tobacco; Brown and Williamson, which is part of British American Tobacco PLC; and the Vector Group’s Liggett Group.

The tobacco industry reached a \$206-billion accord with several US states in 1998.

Police Save Students Lost on Great Wall

By Wu Chen

After an exhaustive 21-hour search, a make-shift rescue team found eight Peking University students, including three from Hong Kong, early Monday morning after they were lost overnight on the Jiankou section of the Great Wall.

Many local people from nearby Tianxianyu village took part in the rescue operation.

"We want to thank our rescuers. They worked so hard!" a Miss Zhang, one of the eight students, was quoted as saying by the *Beijing Star Daily* on Sunday.

The eight students ascended the treacherous section of the wall for a

weekend outing. After a long trudge to the peak, they decided to head home, but took a wrong turn. They struggled to find their way back as the sun began to set and by the time night had fallen, they were completely lost.

None of the students was carrying a flashlight, so they decided to stop walking and call the police.

Because they were not able to give the police their exact location, officers were forced to ask local villagers to act as guides. Even then, police took a wrong turn themselves and searched in vain for three hours.

"We saw no other way but to set off firecrackers so the students would

hear them and shout," Wang Lihu, a policeman from the Bohai station under the Huairou Public Security Substation told *Beijing Star Daily*.

Once the police had a rough idea of the students' location, they shouted for them to stay where they were and wait. The direct route before the search team was too dangerous to try in the dark, however, forcing them to climb down a second time.

They managed to rescue the students on their third ascent, done shortly after daybreak on Monday morning.

Police from the Huairou Public Security Substation told the *Mirror* newspaper later that day that the Jiankou section of the Great Wall had



The eight students were found and rescued early Monday morning.

not been developed or opened to tourism and climbing on such sections of the wall violated related regulations.

Authorities also recommended that visitors to wilder sections of the Great Wall should hire local guides, pick safe routes and carefully monitor the time to make sure they have enough light to safely get down.

Four Old Summer Palace Spots Renovated

By Chu Meng

Restoration of four historic sections of the Yuanmingyuan, or Old Summer Palace, was completed last Friday, but they will not be opened to the public for the time being, the site's administrative office announced.

The Yuanmingyuan, formerly known as "the garden of all Chinese gardens", was built over a period of 150 years starting in 1709 and featured gardens and structures built in traditional Chinese and Western style. It was razed by Anglo-French forces in 1860, and again in 1900 by the Eight Allied Forces.

The four renovated sites, the Shangxiatian-guan, Xinghuachunguan, Tantandangdang and Wanfang'anhe, were restored to their appearance after the palace was sacked, not to their original state.

They stand in the relatively remote northwestern section of the grounds and had been illegally occupied by businesses and residential houses. In September last year, their renovation and protection was listed as a key project by the administrators of the Yuanmingyuan and work to remove illegal buildings, clear garbage and otherwise restore the areas to their past splendor began.

"We are not preparing to show them to the public because the construction of tourism facilities such as additional paths and bridges would inevitably harm the sites," relic protection expert Wang Shiren, hired as a special consultant for the Yuanmingyuan project, told the *Beijing News* last Friday. "Moreover, our renovations are pretty experimental, we're not sure if what we've done is the best way to protect these places."

Locked Out? Call the Cops

By Dong Nan

Beijing residents that forget their keys or are otherwise locked out of their homes can dial the police emergency number 110, or the special hotline 1600110, and police officers will bring professional locksmiths to the scene starting this week.

On Monday, the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau and Beijing Municipal Bureau of Commerce published regulations regarding the locksmith trade that named 18 locksmiths firms now considered official police partners.

The regulations require staff of the 18 companies to hold Beijing Lock Opening Service Cards, certifications granted by the Beijing Repairing Trade Association and the Beijing Public Security Bureau, and only open doors with police supervision.

These professional locksmiths must also have clean criminal records and their fingerprints should be registered with the Beijing Repairing Trade Association.

The move was intended to normalize the locksmith trade and prevent skilled lock breakers from abusing their abilities to break into and burgle private homes and businesses, Wang Xiaobing, an official from the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, said at a press conference on Monday.

Shot Kidnapper Survives for Day in Court

By Chen Si

A kidnapper shot in the head by police in late August was able to walk again on September 17 after a month in the hospital, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported two days later. Once he is truly on his feet, his likely destination is jail, as he will face prosecution by authorities in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province.

As *Beijing Today* reported on August 20, Zhang Kailin entered a classroom in the Shijiazhuang Women and Children Activities Center on August 17 and held two children at knife-point. After negotiations with police broke down, an officer shot Zhang through an open window.

Zhang was believed dead after the incident, but awoke three hours later on the way to the local funeral home and was rushed to the Third Hospital of Hebei.

Four police were still standing guard around Zhang as he laid in his hospital bed, the bandage around his head removed, the *Beijing Youth Daily* report said.

The hospital announced on September 19 that the bullet fired from the policeman's gun had passed through a part of Zhang's brain not considered vital to life functions. After four weeks of providing him medical care and food, the hospital had racked up costs of 40,000 yuan, it said.

"Zhang will bear liability in the case if he or his relatives do not file a case of their own around the shooting," Li Huichen, a lawyer from the Hengjiaxin Law Office told *Beijing Youth Daily*.

"There are strict tenets in the law regarding when policemen can shoot suspects. In this case, Zhang was very agitated at the time and could have done anything, endangering the lives of the hostages. So, the policeman had the legal right to shoot, meaning there is little chance for Zhang to win a case for compensation."

The procuratorate office of Shijiazhuang has announced that police were still looking into the case. "Judging from the present situation, there is little doubt that Zhang will be prosecuted," the procuratorate said in a statement.

Echoes of the Past

By Dong Nan

After two years of repairs, the Shenyueshu, or Department of Sacred Music, regarded as the country's top music school in ancient times, reopened to tourists inside the grounds of the Temple of Heaven this Monday. On display in the refurbished structure is a fascinating range of ancient musical instruments that have disappeared from modern music, including the *yu* and *zhu*, both

percussion instruments, and the *yue*, a short flute.

At the reopening ceremony, 50 specially garbed musicians, some wielding priceless ancient instruments, performed the *Taipingling*, the Song for Peace, a work played at imperial ceremonies and sacrifices for over 1,000 years.

Similar performances of ancient music will be occasionally held at the renovated department for tourists.

Carnie Folk Stranded in Chengdu

by Wu Chen

China has proven a financial house of horrors for the organizers and staff of two international traveling carnivals this year.

Despite a heavy advertising blitz, the World Carnival held in Beijing over the summer ended up losing millions of yuan. More recently, the Chengdu Carnival in the capital of Sichuan Province also failed to earn profits and has left 40 foreign ride operators stranded in the city without food, money, shelter or the means to return to their home countries.

"The main problem now is that without the permission of Beijing Transworld Festival Corp we cannot go out of Chengdu," Peter, a German employee of the Chengdu Carnival, told *Beijing Today* by telephone on Monday.

The Chengdu Carnival not only ran in the red as far fewer people than expected paid to play this summer, but also was saddled with lawsuits filed by

angry domestic partners and advertising agents after the carnival proved unable to pay its debts.

It was organized by Beijing Transworld Festival Corp with additional investment from Chengdu Carnival Festival Investment Corp.

The stranded vendors, who hail from Germany, France, the Netherlands and other countries and had signed contracts with Beijing Transworld Festival Corp, have been left with so little money that they cannot afford to ship their ride equipment to other venues or to pay for travel back home.

"A Guangzhou company wants us to go there, but we cannot," Peter said. "I don't know what to do and how to solve this."

He said the Chengdu government had deferred their visas as previously promised and provided him and the other stranded carnival operators with welcome supplies of food.

"But that does not solve the main problem. We need money to go back."



Peter, a German carnival ride operator, is hoping to take his show to Guangzhou to earn some badly needed money.



Photo by Wang Zhenlong

Paper Reveals Local Baby Trade

By Dong Nan

Black market sales of babies, long a problem in rural parts of China, has reared its ugly head in Beijing, *Beijing Youth Daily* said Tuesday.

The day before, a woman surnamed Yu called the newspaper to report she had seen women selling pirated DVD movies asking whether passersby wanted to buy babies outside a bus station on Yuquan Lu in Haidian District.

A newspaper reporter visited the site Tuesday and saw some women hawking pirated disks, but did not hear them mention babies until a middle-aged man walked by. At that point, one of the women asked the man whether he wanted to adopt a baby, but he walked past without responding.

The reporter then approached the women and claimed he was interested in the baby. She showed him a picture of an infant boy and quoted a price of 20,000 yuan for the child. When the reporter asked to see the child in the flesh, the woman said once he brought the 20,000 yuan, he could inspect the baby and walk away with him the same day if satisfied.

The baby dealer said the child belonged to an unmarried relative and the money was intended to cover the costs of feeding the infant. But when the reporter said he preferred a girl, the woman asked him to come back a few days later because she did not have any girl babies at hand.

When the reporter asked how many babies she had sold, the woman became agitated and fled the scene.

The Yuquan Police Station told *Beijing Today* on Thursday that the police would investigate the matter.



An interested customer (crouching) talks to the DVD and baby dealer (right). Photo by Wang Xiaoxi



Photo by Jia Ting

Four Years and Counting...

By Zhou Ying

A giant clock was erected on Tian'anmen Square Tuesday afternoon and started to tick away the days, hours and minutes until the lighting of the torch for the eagerly anticipated 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

On hand for the official kick off of the countdown at 6 pm were Liu Jingmin, executive vice-president of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG), Athens gold medalist Wang Yifu, Beijing resident Li Changxin, middle school student Wang Yu and Stephen Urquhart, president of the watchmaker Omega.

BOCOG vice president Jiang Xiaoyu said at the ceremony that the countdown clock was a new landmark in the city and one that symbolized the concept of a "people's Olympics".

"The clock will witness the realization of China's century-long Olympic dream and will become the impetus to the preparations for the Olympic Games," he added.

The 14-meter tall, 5.5-meter wide clock used the Global Timing System to guarantee its precision, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported Wednesday.

A similar countdown clock was turned on at the same time in Qingdao, Shandong Province, which will host the sailing events of the 2008 Games.

Is China a Foreigner's Architectural Playground?

By Zhou Ying

More than two million people from around the world will converge in Beijing September 20 to October 6 for the First Architectural Biennale of Asia, which will showcase contemporary architecture from the world's most active country in the field.

The opening ceremony will feature two of the world's top designers, Paul Andreu (Sweden) and Pierre de Meuron (France), whose recent designs – the “Egg-shell” National Grand Theater and “Bird's Nest” National Stadium respectively – have aroused heated debate among the public and local architects.

In recent years, almost all of the big projects in Beijing were designed by foreign architects: The new China Central Television (CCTV) building, with an investment of nearly \$800 million, was designed by the trendy Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas; English designer Norman Foster won the bid for the new terminal at Beijing Capital Airport, with a price tag of \$2 billion; and the much-talked-about National Theater project, valued at \$600 million, was snapped up by French designer Paul Andreu.

From colossal national projects to Olympic venues, five-star hotels to high-grade business buildings, large enterprise headquarters to common residential areas, it seems foreign architects have taken over.

In early March, in a report entitled “An Architectural Revolution in Beijing,” the British Broadcasting Corporation de-



The controversial “Eggshell” National Grand Theater designed by Paul Andreu is now under construction.

Photo by Photocom

scribed pre-Olympics Beijing as a city blindly pursuing the world's top designers to shed its image as a “follower” and flaunt its modernity to the world.

Heated discussion among domestic architects has ensued surrounding the nature of the new designs: Should China simply copy western nations or reflect its own, unique past? Some critics have even suggested that Beijing has been reduced to a mere experimental zone for world designers. For example, the new design for China's Na-

tional Grand Theater clashes with its official surroundings, they charge.

Here's what the experts have to say:

Paul Andreu, designer of China's National Grand Theater

Firstly, I have to declare that it is not the majority of people in China who oppose my design. Some criticize that the theater is quite weird and would clash with the style and characteristics of Chinese architecture.

Whenever people raise the question to me, I ask them

what is the style of Chinese architecture. Till now, no answer can satisfy me. Therefore, I think we cannot estimate modern architecture with traditional concepts.

I really oppose the concept that Beijing has become an experimental area for world designers. Among the famous foreign architectural-design companies in the world, there are not so many that have come to develop the Chinese market. Moreover, the existing “bizarre style” is not that strange in my eyes.

Simon Wei, Chinese student at Newcastle University, department of landscape design, UK

There are underlining problems underneath those luxurious appearances. First of all, the construction boom results in skyrocketing costs of materials. For instance, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron's “Bird's Nest” Olympics Stadium for 2008 will roughly use 40,000 tons of steel. This will be particularly affected by the price rise because the price of steel has doubled in China recently. As a consequence, the Olympic Stadium has to be redesigned to “make it more efficient”.

Another remarkable phenomenon is that the booming construction is jumping forward too much. If one project is built because of want and necessity it would be fine, but the bad news in China is that there are excessive buildings being erected beyond what is needed.

Finally, there is a trend among developers or architects to make a project extraordinary, unique and different for the Olympics. All of them have formed a new atmosphere to test such brave dreams and develop them. Those ideas in other places may not be possible to realize. But I think this is the only piece of good news for Chinese people.

Wang Mingxian, renowned architecture critic

Everyone wishes these landmark buildings were designed by Chinese architects. But, unfortunately, Chinese architects indeed are not in a position to do so. Then, what reason do we have to reject these great architects who

have achieved immense prestige and success in other countries?

After all, their previous experiments have been recognized by international architecture circles. Among those architects who have come to Beijing, Koolhaas is the recipient of the Pritzker Architecture Prize for 2000 – the foremost authoritative prize in the field of architecture; Herzog Schlumberger and de Meuron won the prize in 2001.

They are master architects recognized worldwide. And their experiments in China offer more benefits than harm to the evolution of Chinese architecture.

Robert Booth, editorial writer, Building Design

The thrill of working for masters with apparently unlimited ambition and a disregard for scale that would sate the appetite of even the most egotistical architect, was too much to resist. The largest country on the planet appeared to be a blank canvas for architectural expression, and the importance of history was, indeed, mincemeat.

Now, China's leaders have cold feet, and the people should rejoice. OK, Koolhaas's CCTV building and Herzog & de Meuron's Olympic Stadium are clearly remarkable pieces of statement architecture; structures that break the mould. But these represent the tip of the iceberg, and across the country vast projects by international architects are springing up with only a fraction of the panache. The decision to put CCTV and the Olympic Stadium on hold grabs the headlines, but the wider self-imposed slowdown in China is much more important, and not just because it could stop the construction economy from overheating.

The hiatus is a chance to reappraise the right way to build in China. It seems wrong to make mincemeat of memory, and it is equally wrong to pander to the authorities' disregard for urbanism. British architects must do more for China than treat it as an architectural playground.

Le Jialong, director, Beijing Central Engineering & Research Incorporation

As an architect, I don't think the designs of the CCTV building and National Theater are strange. As science and technology develops, the designs will be more and more weird. I think we should try our best to make the public accept the new trend of architecture gradually.

Frankly speaking, comparing domestic architects to foreign ones, we can find that we need to do more to catch up to them. However, some refuse to face this fact. If we close the door to the outside world, I am afraid that it will hamper overall development.

Historically, many famous buildings have confronted resistance initially. For example, many French people could not understand why American architects should design the Louvre Museum. In time, the Louvre has become one of the most important symbols in France.

Therefore, I think architecture is not a topic that one can discuss for one or two years. It needs a long discussion. Maybe when we see the buildings 30 years later, everyone will admire the great designs of the three foreign architects.

Karsten Konnopka, project manager at building site in Germany

Architecture will have some styles but is not related to a nation. The Olympic Games are the greatest public event, recognized all over the world. So, the whole world is also watching the architecture of your highlights, like CCTV, National Stadium, etc. In this case, it would be a failure to think that foreign architecture is experimental.

Who has built the stadia of the last Olympic Games in Greece? Of course, it was not a Greek! Because the aim of such global projects is to get professional support from the world's best architects who could be foreigners, but they can also consider national requirements concerning national (Chinese) architecture.

So, You Want to Have a 2nd Child?

By Chen Si

Having a second child has been a concern for many people in China.

A recent investigation by the Shanghai Population and Family Planning Commission suggests that more local families welcome the new local policy of bearing a second child, according to *The Beijing News* September 20.

The new regulation on population and family planning in Shanghai was put into operation this April. Compared to the 1990 regulation, the new version omits the article about a mandatory four-year interval before having a second child, and applicants with a registered permanent address in the city (not just in the countryside) are now also eligible. In addition, the new policy is also open to remarried couples.

Those applying to bear a second child should meet one of the following qualifications: Married couples are both single children; the couple's first child is disabled; one party is disabled; one party has a registered permanent address in the countryside and one party is a single child.

Remarried couples will only be considered for a second child if: One party has no dependents from a previous marriage and the other party has just one or two children from a previous marriage; if both parties have no dependents from a previous marriage and are both single children; or if both parties have a child from a previous marriage where at least one of the two children is disabled.

In China, family planning is a basic national policy that was proposed in the 1950s by renowned demographer Ma Yinchu. But during the Cultural Revolution, former chairman Mao Zedong renounced Ma's policy with the theory of power in numbers, calling on the nation to bear more children.

During the 1980 reforms, family planning made a comeback and families were instructed to have just one child. Since 2001, the one-child policy has been modified so that couples

where both parties were single children could have a second child. Even so, Shanghai's population has experienced a negative growth for 10 consecutive years since 1993, with the problem of an aging population taking its toll.

Is the new policy a good idea? Will it produce any negative effects? Let's see what the public is saying:

Gui Shixun, president, Shanghai Demographic Society

It is good progress. The new regulation can take effect on controlling the population and the trend of aging. It shows the resolution of promoting a more active child-bearing policy in Shanghai.

The new policy has removed the four-year interval of bearing a second child and gives more people priority to have a second child, including those who are disabled and have a registered permanent address in the countryside. All this shows humanism.

Liu Dezhong, editor, People's Daily website

Now, the child-bearing rate in China has reached the same as that of developed countries. In a population report in China by the National Population and Family Planning Commission this year, the birthrate and natural rate of growth are declining every year in China. However, as the population base is large, the population is still increasing.

Many people have not completely changed the idea of bearing children, and the low birth level is not stable either. In this case, do you think it is appropriate to relax the control on the population increase? Can't this increase the pressures on employment and social security?

Duan Chengrong, professor, Demographic Institute, Renmin University, Beijing

The country once demanded each family have one child to control the increasing population. But, in fact, most families would like to have two children or even more, so they have to make sacrifices. However, not all families have the same ability to bear these sacrifices. To protect such brittle families, the Shanghai government has relaxed the

family-planning policy.

This new regulation still has strict demands on having a second child, and not many people can meet the demands. So, it will not increase the population much, and will not increase social pressures either.

Li Xi, postgraduate, Beijing University

I don't think the standard of having a second child is fair. Why should we give priority to families in the countryside? They can't get a good education, and having more children means suffering more pains. On the contrary, people in the city should be given the right to bear more children, no matter whether they are single children or not. Their genes are good and they have better living conditions. Society is progressing; we cannot place the hope for the future on ‘seeds’ that are not outstanding.

Gong Wen, joint venture employee, Beijing

I got married last week and my husband and I are both single children. The Beijing government allows couples that are both single children to have a second child, and I would like to do so.

Two children are better than one as it can avoid some problems. As the middle ages get older, the pressure of supporting them will be reduced. Having two children is also beneficial to their growth. Of course, if you want to have two children you should have the ability to foster them first, including a sense of responsibility and an economic base.

Gao Ji, engineer, China Academy of Building Research, Beijing

It seems that Shanghai has become a “special region for child bearing,” but we know the right of bearing is equal. Must the aging problem of a city be alleviated by relaxing the local child-bearing policy? Japan plans to introduce immigrants to alleviate the aging problem. What about Shanghai and other similar cities? Why can't they introduce outside persons to solve the same problem?

Zhou Haiwang, vice president, Demographic Institute of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences

Some people think Shanghai can't have the privilege of relaxing the family-planning pol-

Provisions on bearing a second child in “Regulations on the Population and Family Planning in Shanghai”

Requirements for married couples applying to bear a second child:

1. Both parties are single children.
2. The first child is evaluated by an authorized organization as having a non-hereditary deformity and cannot be integrated into the workforce.
3. One party is evaluated by an authorized organization as having a non-hereditary deformity and cannot take care of himself/herself.
4. One party meets the condition of “wounded” or “disabled” soldier in the second-class Grade B or above.
5. One party is a fisherman who has and continues to go out to sea for five consecutive years.
6. One party has a registered permanent address in the countryside and one party is a single child.
7. The wife is an agricultural registered permanent resident in the city; she does not have a brother; her sister only has one child; and her husband supports her parents.
8. Couples without children from previous marriages that are being diagnosed by an above-

second-class hospital in the city after marriage with proof of infertility and pregnancy after legal adoption, can apply to bear a second child.

Requirements for remarried couples applying to bear a second child:

1. One party does not have any children from a previous marriage; the other party had a maximum two children before marriage.
2. Each party does not have any children from a previous marriage; both parties are single children.
3. Both parties have each had a child before marriage; one party is a single child and one is an agricultural registered permanent resident in the city.
4. Both parties have each had a child before marriage, and one of the two children was evaluated by an authorized organization as having a non-hereditary deformity and cannot be integrated into the workforce.
5. Conditions for having a second child for other reasons are stipulated separately by the municipal government.

By Dong Nan

As we all know, work takes up most of one's whole life, and most people believe that one's career determines quality of life and even one's future. But is everyone satisfied with their job?

According to a recent survey by China Human Resources Development Net (www.chinahrd.net), most Chinese are not so optimistic. Generally, one out of every 10 people in urban China is very unhappy with his or her job.

No satisfaction

Co-conducted by such media as China Human Resources Development Net, Computer World Web and *Businessmen* magazine, the survey, which involved 5,350 urban employees, evaluated respondents' feelings towards their jobs. The participants' responses were recorded using a five-point scale system where 5 indicated complete satisfaction and 0 no satisfaction at all with their line of work. The average job satisfaction rate was a mediocre 2.6.

Almost one-third of the respondents said they were very unhappy with their jobs while less than one-tenth said they were satisfied. Nine percent rated their job satisfaction lev-



Forty-four percent of survey respondents said they felt uncomfortable in their work environment.

Survey: Got the Career Blues?

el between 0-1, 20% between 1-2, 37% between 2-3, 24% between 3-4, and only 10% chose 4-5.

While many respondents agreed with the following statements – “My job makes me angry,” “My job makes me tired,” “My job makes me feel lost,” “My job makes me feel threatened” and “My job makes me bored,” few chose “My work makes me feel free,” “My work makes me excited” and “My work makes me proud.”

According to the survey, men, who scored an average 2.5 points on the job satisfaction scale, proved less content with their work than women, who averaged 2.8. A survey report released by China Human Resources Development Net concluded that this could be attributed to the fact that men faced more pressures than women in today's society.

The survey also suggested that the more educated the individual, the happier he or she would be in their chosen profession. People with a post-graduate degree, for example, were most pleased with their jobs with a score of 2.8, while respondents with a middle school education averaged 2.5 or less.

Specifically, officials and government workers were happiest with their jobs, the survey re-

vealed. The work satisfaction rate for government employees was 2.7 – the highest score – followed by private corporation workers (2.64) and foreign corporations (2.63). Staff at State-owned enterprises was the unhappiest group of workers at 2.4.

Enterprise managers (2.9), human resources and training managers (2.8), medical and health-care workers (2.73), translators and tour guides (2.73), and officials (2.72) were among the top five in terms of a high satisfaction rate, while product researchers (2.44), teachers (2.43), client-service and technical-support specialists (2.35), service personnel (2.31), and transportation, storage and logistics workers (2.22) were among the unhappiest groups.

The culprit

So, why are people so unhappy with their jobs? The survey tried to pinpoint an answer from various perspectives.

About one-third of the respondents believed their workload was too big, while 44% thought it was reasonable. More than 25% complained that the nature of their jobs seriously disturbed their lives, while 50% said it did not. And more than one-tenth said their families did not approve of their jobs.

Why are people unhappy with their jobs?

| Statements | Percentage of respondents who agree |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| My salary is too low | 52.1% |
| I'm not happy with my boss | 52.0% |
| My career is hopeless | 47.5% |
| I am not satisfied with the work environment | 40.4% |
| I don't like my job at all | 34.2% |
| My workload is unreasonable | 33.6% |
| My work seriously disrupts my life | 26.3% |
| Management systems in my enterprise are unreasonable | 21.9% |
| I'm not clear on my responsibilities at work | 19.6% |
| I'm not happy with my workmates | 16.4% |
| My family does not approve of my job | 11.6% |
| I am not able to fulfill my duties | 11.5% |

Qiuqiu who declined to give her first name, said she sacrificed her youth, freedom and health to work as a program director at a television station. “I am 29 years old but many who meet me for the first time think that I am 39,” she complained. “Once, to prepare a temporary TV evening show, I slept three hours a day for one week,” Qiuqiu told *Beijing Today*, adding, “After that I lost three kilograms drastically.”

“I really feel too tired and want to quit, but the salary is too seductive. Now, my only

hope is to save a large amount of money and then retire to study abroad or do something else with the money.”

Twenty-seven-year-old “Jean,” who works as an accountant at a renowned international accounting company, says her parents are always hassling her about finding a boyfriend. “But I really don't have time to do so. Sometimes I envy my old classmates who already have their own families and even children. But what to do?” she asks. “My job takes up all my spare time.”

When asked, “Are your clear

about your responsibilities at work?” 56.7% of the respondents answered “yes,” while 19.6% said “no”; 23.7% were undecided.

“In my position, there are three people. And our responsibilities are never quite clear,” said June Wu, who works as an executive in a public communications corporation. “Basically, our duties are alike, but there are no specific details about that. We have to decide how to divide the work ourselves.” Although Wu says no one ever publicly vents their frustrations, she believes everyone is often unhappy because responsibilities are unevenly distributed.

More than one in six participants expressed resentment towards their colleagues and over 50% showed strong dissatisfaction towards their bosses; 21% said their leaders were tolerable.

One tenacious office assistant surnamed Zhang said: “I hate my leader, an old woman. I want to beat her whenever I come into the office. Obviously, she is not qualified for her position. And her temper is awful; she never pays any attention to our feelings.” Zhang did admit, however, that the woman is good at one thing – flattering her boss, who, according to Zhang,

likes and trusts her.

Forty-four percent of the respondents said they felt uncomfortable in their work environment and working conditions. And more than 60% labelled the whole management system as “unreasonable” and “unsatisfactory.”

As to salary, 52% complained that their wages did not reflect the amount of work they contributed.

Middle school teacher Yu Zhiying, who earns just 2,000 yuan per month, said he doesn't understand why qualified teachers are paid so little for their great contribution to society. “Many of my old classmates at normal universities quit their jobs as teachers because the salaries were too low,” he said, adding, “I truly understand their choice – the salary for teachers is too small.”

Around 50% of the survey participants were pessimistic about their future careers and just one-fifth expressed hope; the remainder were uncertain.

And in all, only 37% said they “loved” their job, while 34% said they “hated” it; the rest could not say.

Is there hope?

Based on the survey results, Zhang Jianguo, CEO of ChinaHR.com believes that apart from reasonable payment and possibility of promotion, it is very important for employers to provide training to employees.

“Most employees would feel depressed if they think they have not improved at all in a position; they would think that the enterprises seek to exploit them without paying attention to their self-development. If enterprises provide training, on one hand, employees' abilities would improve, on the other hand, they would feel that the enterprises truly take care of them and feel much better.”

Wang Lei, a human resources assistant at Panasonic China said: “According to my experiences, uncomfortable relationships among colleagues are easy to make one feel unhappy. Panasonic always pays attention to foster good relationships among employees. For example, every day, every department organizes employees for a brief talk where the content varies from TV programs to love affairs to help employees feel easy and happy all day.”

Xu Xiaoping, a renowned consultant on professional choices suggested that people, especially the young should be patient and practical: “If you always compare yourself to others blindly without knowing your own advantages and disadvantages and taking practical efforts, I'm sure you will be unhappy in your career.”

Source: China Human Resource Development Net and China Youth

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By Wu Chen

“I would like a baby very much. I wanted to give birth to it,” pleaded 29-year-old Ma Weihua to her lawyer on March 29 at the Lanzhou Chengguan Detention Center in Northwest China’s Gansu Province.

Ma was seven weeks pregnant when she was apprehended by the Anti-Drug Group of the Lanzhou Chengguan Public Security Bureau for heroin possession (an offense punishable by death in China) as she arrived in Lanzhou from Urumqi, capital of Northwest China’s Xinjiang, January 25.

But on February 18, Ma was given an abortion without her consent by a doctor who used a general anesthetic.

According to the 49th item of the Criminal Code of the People’s Republic of China, pregnant

Forced Abortion Case Puts Criminal Code on Trial

women are exempted from the death penalty.

Caught in the act

Ma was carrying 1.6 kilograms of heroin when she was stopped by police. According to *South China Weekend News*, a Guangzhou-based newspaper, Ma presented her reasons for carrying the heroin to the anti-drug group.

While working in Urumqi, Ma said she received a phone call

from a friend, Sa Liha, whom met in Sinkiang, asking her to transport some drugs to Lanzhou, capital of Gansu Province. Ma said she declined the request because it was too hard to buy a train ticket back to Lanzhou. Sa, however, said he would call her after the Spring Festival.

On January 24, Sa called back asking Ma to buy a ticket and leave that same day, promising

her 5,000 yuan in compensation. Ma said she was instructed to fetch the “thing” in front of the No. 2 Hospital in Urumqi.

A young man gave Ma a yellow vest with heroin inside at the designated location.

According to Ma, she called Sa who told her he was already in Lanzhou, adding that she should send the drugs directly to him upon her arrival.

On January 25, when Ma arrived in Lanzhou and called Sa, he told her to meet him at the “petroleum edifice.” But when Ma arrived there by taxi, she was stopped by police as soon as she stepped out of the vehicle. The police then discovered the heroin and took Ma in for questioning.

Weng Weihua, Ma’s lawyer, reported some inconsistencies surrounding the case to *South*

China Weekend News. According to Weng, the police said they had monitored Sa’s phone calls to Ma, which is how they say they managed to crack the case. But Weng wondered how the police was able to identify Ma so quickly based on mere telephone conversations with Sa. He also questioned why Sa was not apprehended?

The police made no comments in response to Weng’s investigation. However, an anonymous source told *South China Weekend News* last Thursday that Sa had been transporting drugs for many years without being caught, while many of his accomplices were arrested.

Forced abortion

Ma was sent to the Lanzhou Chengguan Detention Center after the incident for 48 hours. During a routine examination, she was declared pregnant, and the center refused to hold a pregnant offender in custody.

On February 18, the anti-drug group took Ma to Kangtai Hospital. The next day, a doctor gave Ma a general anesthetic and performed an abortion even though she had not signed a form authorizing the procedure. According to the head of the Chengguan Anti-Drug Group, a general anesthetic had to be administered because “the patient was unwilling to cooperate.”

Generally, anesthetics are not required for aborting early pregnancies, such as Ma’s.

Li Junyi, head of the Anti-Drug Group, who signed the abortion slip for the client, refused to comment. Zheng, section chief of the Propaganda Section of the Lanzhou Public Security Bureau told *South China Weekend News* that Lanzhou’s Public Security system had launched an investigation.

However, after the forced abortion, police failed to submit an affidavit that said Ma was not aware of her pregnancy before being examined at the detention center, or the abortion slip permitting the procedure to take place to the procuratorate.

When Weng complained that some vital evidence was missing, the procuratorate sent a team to check the files at Kangtai Hospital and found the abortion slip.

Weng argued that while carrying 1.6 kilograms of heroin is punishable by death, since Ma was pregnant and aborted by force, she should not receive the death penalty.

A civil servant at the Lanzhou Public Security Bureau told *South China Weekend News* that some drug pushers take advantage of the regulation in the Criminal Code and get pregnant on purpose to escape the death penalty, “It is possible that Ma Weihua also did that,” he charged.

However, Chen Ruihua, a professor of criminal law at the School of Law at Peking University, said that even if this was true, it could not justify the forced abortion. Chen also pointed out that public security departments should know that the laws are based on the principle of humanism and that fetuses are innocent; so, even if certain criminals may abuse the regulation, the 49th item must be honoured.

First court hearing

In the first court hearing on July 13, Weng defended Ma based on the following: First of all, Ma was apprehended before the drugs reached the hands of the traffickers, which, he says, is less harmful to society; secondly, Ma’s actions were instigated by another party, and it was her first time committing a crime. Besides, he added, Ma cooperated fully with the police.

More importantly, Weng said that Ma was already pregnant when stopped by police. She was given an abortion without her consent and the 49th item of the Criminal Code must be applied.

However, during the sentencing process, Ma’s brother-in-law — a civil servant who works for the Lanzhou government, and who first told Weng about the forced abortion — is now unwilling to cooperate and refuses to acknowledge his relationship to Ma, according to *South China Weekend News*.

Changes Sweep Over Former Drug Village

By Wang Fang

Last Sunday, China Central Television’s (CCTV) *Economic Half an Hour* featured a follow-up on China’s most notorious drug haven, Banlao village, tracing its prolonged struggle and eventual triumph over the drug trade.

Poverty: Root of crime

Banlao village is located in Yongde County, Lincang, in the southwest of Yunnan Province. It takes six hours on the bus and four hours on foot to get from the county town to Laozhai, where the village committee is based.

Li Deren, village Party secretary, first introduced Banlao to China CCTV: “Our village is neighboring Myanmar and it takes only one day to get to the other side of the border. In the past, villagers ran to Myanmar to earn a living since it was so poor here. They could not resist the temptation if their boss offered them about 300 yuan or at most 1,000 yuan to traffic drugs. However, this is at the cost of losing their lives if they are caught.”

The village, which lies just 40 kilometers from Kokang in Myanmar, was once an oasis town along the ancient Silk Road to Myanmar. However, at present, it is a remote place and people have all but forgotten about it. The region is no more flourishing today than it was in history. Before the liberation of China in 1949, villagers sold drugs for dealers to make a living, and this has been their traditional occupation.

“In the past, the villagers here have always trafficked drugs for foreign drug dealers as well as helped them sell drugs to Baoshan and some other inland places,” said Li Yunlong, commissar of the Yongde Police Bureau. “Almost every household in Banlao village was in the business of drug trafficking.”

Li Yunlong revealed that his unit had apprehended 90 of the 3,000 known traffickers from 2000 to 2003. According to Li, poverty is the main reason why laws are broken.

This typical, poverty-stricken village’s mountainous terrain occupies 98 percent of its total arable land, and the average staple food supply totalled just 1.3 kilograms in 2003.

“In 2002, 60 percent of the people in the village could not get enough staple food, and they had not yet seen a car,” said Li Deren.

Banlao village’s annual average income reached just 300 yuan in 2002. However, trafficking drugs can secure a few hundred more yuan — and for the hungry villagers, this offer is very tempting.

Statistics show that in 1999, 10 percent of the drugs in China came from Lincang and one-half of the drugs in Lincang came from Yongde County. Banlao villagers made up 85 percent of all drug traffickers arrested by local police between 2000 and 2003.

Developing the local economy

It is a three-hour walk along the mountain roads to get to



Bird’s-eye view of former drug haven, Banlao village

‘In the past, villagers ran to Myanmar to earn a living since it was so poor here. They could not resist the temptation if their boss offered them about 300 yuan or at most 1,000 yuan to traffic drugs. However, this is at the cost of losing their lives if they are caught.’

— Li Deren, village Party secretary.



Village Party Secretary Li Deren introduces the Banlao story to CCTV.

told CCTV that besides sugar canes, the government has also helped his family raise cattle and pigs.

The annual average income in Benglongzhai has jumped to 600 yuan from 300 yuan in 2002. Before 2000, only the wealthy had enough maize to eat, but now most people in the village can buy rice. “The living standard is much better now so no one wants to be involved in drug trafficking,” said Sha.

Today, television receivers grace the roofs of some villagers’ homes in Benglongzhai and some buildings have even been equipped with a second story. Sha said that if he can sell his sugar canes at a good price this autumn, he will buy a television set to “improve his life.”

In 2000, Yunnan Province listed Banlao as a key village in its fight against drugs. Joint teams from the Lincang government, local police bureau and local poverty-alleviation

commission have visited the village many times to help its people improve their way of life. Now, six natural villages have boosted their annual average income from 300 to 600 yuan by developing the local economy. In addition, many villagers cooperate with police to help them ferret out drug dealers. Over the past five years, with help from the villagers, local police have caught six drug dealers and confiscated about 100 kilograms of drugs.

“The government encourages the villagers to utilize the local resources to grow sugar canes and tea to develop the economy,” said Zhang Zhongyi, vice-commissioner of the Lincang Administrative Office in an interview with CCTV.

As to the surplus labour in Banlao village, Zhang said the government is organizing the people to work in other provinces, such as Shenzhen in South China’s Guangdong Province.

The State has already exported 200 of the 2,000 surplus workers in the village this year.

A glimpse into China’s drug trade

In 1999, the National Drug Control Commission and the Ministry of Public Security listed 13 counties as focal drug-trafficking regions. Kunming and Dali of Yunnan Province, and Guangzhou and Shenzhen of Guangdong Province, for example, were identified as distribution and turnover centers; Zhaojue and Panxian in China’s Southwest Sichuan and Guizhou provinces respectively, Tongxin in Northwest Ningxia Autonomous Region and Dongxiang in Central Anhui Province were described as drug outflow regions; and three landways from Yunnan Province to Myanmar’s border town of Muse, Kokang and Wa State, and several water routes from China’s Fujian Province in the east, Shenzhen, and the northeastern port city of Dalian to foreign countries, were also exposed as main drug-trafficking routes.

According to the National Drug Control Commission, the anti-drug movement has been integrated to developing local economies and alleviating poverty to effect a permanent solution. In the first half of 2004, eight counties were removed from the list after having tackled the drug-trafficking problem in an efficient manner.

The National Drug Control Commission concluded that improving a region’s social and economic situation is the most effective way to eliminating the root of drug trafficking.

(Source: CCTV)

By Song Yin

Catholic to Communist, from California to Beijing, David Quentin Dauthier, who calls himself “Du Dawei” in China, has chosen a different way of life.

With soft, flaxen hair and blue-brown eyes, Dauthier is easy-going and kind. It is no wonder he has already been featured in various Chinese media five times.

But what is it that makes this particular foreigner - a seemingly ordinary guy who works for a living - so special?

More than 300 years ago, the Dauthier family emigrated from France to North America. Born into a family of devoted Catholics, as a child, Dauthier dreamed of becoming a priest. But things changed when he reached the age of 20.

While studying philosophy as a freshman in college, Dauthier encountered Karl Marx and became completely engrossed in his thought. He read all 50 pages of *The Communist Manifesto* in four hours. “As long as you understand it, you’ll find communism is really a great thing,” beamed Dauthier.

Eventually, Dauthier began to approach everything around him through Marx. “All I saw has proven Marx’s theory,” he attested. Finally, in 1995, Dauthier joined the Communist Party of America and stopped going to church.

While Dauthier admits that communism in the United States is not fully embraced - “it means staying away from the church, houses and properties being confiscated and being impoverished together” - Dauthier is quick to add that he knows what he’s doing because “that’s belief.”

Based on his outstanding educational background, Dauthier found a good “trouble-shooting” job at a holding company in California. Although he became very experienced in his job, at the same time, he found it boring. “It became easy for me to solve all kinds of problems, but, suddenly, I found I was just doing my job repeatedly,” he said. Dauthier stayed with the company from 1992 to 1996; but, in 1999, he paid a visit to China, which ignited his desire to stay in the country. That year, Dauthier became a foreign teacher at a high school attached to the Beijing Normal University, and settled in Beijing.

A communist is as a communist does

Had Dauthier not come to China, he would have been a member of the American middle class, leading a wealthy and relatively easy life. “But I’d like to see how socialism was going in China, so I came here across the Pacific Ocean,” he said, adding: “I really feel at home in Beijing, and that has nothing to do with my political beliefs.”

Dauthier finished reading the anthologies of former leaders Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping - even the *Three Represents* theory in his home in Beijing. “Although China has met various problems in its social progression,” says Dauthier on socialism with Chinese characteristics after his five-year stay in the Chinese capital, “the main direction is right, and China’s moving on in a proper way.”

Four years ago, Dauthier came across a boy sitting beside a snow-lined street in Beijing. The boy, whose name was Xiao Jiu, was a high school student from a village in Southwest China’s Guizhou Province looking for money to help pay for his tuition. Back in his warm apartment, Dauthier could not help thinking about the boy. He finally treated Xiao Jiu to McDonald’s and brought him back to his home. Having confirmed that he was indeed a student, Dauthier decided to donate 1,500 yuan every semester towards Xiao Jiu’s studies. After Xiao Jiu’s graduation from high school, Dauthier went on to support his studies in a non-government-funded school in Beijing, shelling out more than 10,000 yuan per

year for Xiao Jiu’s schooling and living expenses. Dauthier even held a birthday party for his “adopted son” in a restaurant and bought him a guitar since Xiao Jiu showed an interest in music. Dauthier says he cares about Xi Jiu’s needs and hopes he will be as healthy and happy as the other boys in Beijing.

Besides Xiao Jiu, Dauthier also assisted an impoverished female student of Northeast China’s Shanxi Province, who was once supported by Dauthier’s friend. Unfortunately, since his friend’s family had encountered some economic problems, Dauthier carried on the torch. He consistently sent money to the girl - who didn’t even know Dauthier was her benefactor - for almost three years until she graduated from high school.

“The task of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping is to reconstruct society, and, you know, I am not able to do this. But what I can do is help people,” said Dauthier.

“And this is my life philosophy: Seeking a balance between helping others and sacrificing myself. Each individual has the ability to offer help,” he added.

Last year, Dauthier came across an article in *Beijing Today* about a peasant with AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) in Central China’s Henan Province who

adopted dozens of AIDS orphans. The report really touched him, and Dauthier contacted the peasant at once offering 4,000 yuan every month. During that period, although Dauthier says his two jobs nearly drove him “insane,” he still managed to send the money on time. “Without my busy part time job, I could not make ends meet,” recalled Dauthier. “But that wouldn’t affect my volunteer work,” he added. “It wasn’t the orphans but the adamant peasant who actually caused me to do this.” Even with his hectic schedule, Dauthier continued to volunteer at a training class for handicapped people.



From Catholic to Communist, David Quentin Dauthier says living in Beijing has nothing to do with his political beliefs.

Photos by BaoWei

An American Commie in China



Dauthier soaks up some inspirational literature.

of China for corruption, but, actually, it is bureaucracy that has developed corruption for thousands of years in China. As for the gap between the rich and the poor, that’s an inevitable period in the progress of development.”

Dauthier agrees with China’s late leader Deng Xiaoping: “China’s trying to enter socialism directly from feudalism. ... I like socialism with Chinese characteristics.”

The Beijing single life

Dauthier rents an apartment near Dongzhimen in Beijing’s busy Chaoyang District. The simply decorated, clean and cozy apartment consists of one living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen, bathroom and storage room. He says he feels “easy” in his surroundings.

As a seasoned Beijinger, Dauthier now speaks Chinese fluently and writes Chinese characters well. But he can still recall the communication difficulties he encountered when he first came to Beijing in 1999.

“It was pretty hard. I have a friend who was a student at the Beijing Science and Technology University at that time. We both knew little about each other’s language. So, we just started communicating by pointing at certain words in an English-Chinese dictionary,” laughs Dauthier. “The communication really took time. Finally, I understood he wanted me to visit his home.”

Delighted, Dauthier gave his friend the money for the train ticket. “He went to buy the cheapest ticket to save my money,” he added proudly. “But when I saw the train - my God - it looked like it was from 1949!”

With no air-conditioning or seats, and with the windows sealed shut, Dauthier and his friend were forced to stand among the crowded passengers for 16 hours. “I understood that it would be a six-hour trip,” recalled Dauthier. “But when I was ready to get off, he grabbed my arm and I realized that he meant 16 hours instead of six.”

Upon their arrival, they boarded a small bus and travelled for three or four more hours, and then walked 5 or 6 miles to a little village near Russia. In any case, Dauthier says the experience was a happy one. “I had a fairly good time in the village for almost three months, and I decided to live in China right after that.”

Now, Dauthier, 33, teaches English literature and composition at the Beijing Normal University high school and Chaoyang Foreign Language School. He also reads and teaches essays written by Lu Xun, Hu Shi and Lin Yutang, and admires the philosophy of Hu Shi and

Lu Xun. “Lu Xun’s articles are inventive but may be somewhat difficult for high school students to understand. Anyway, he’s one of the greatest masters in Asia of the 20th century.”

Edgar Allan Poe is Dauthier’s favorite author. “He’s symbolic and romantic and he has suffered so much during his life,” says Dauthier. “He is a superman.”

Although he is expected to keep a distance from his students on a social level, Dauthier says he has made a few good friends among those who have graduated and are pursuing their studies in college.

According to Dauthier, the main problem with the Chinese educational system is that teachers don’t perceive students as individuals and students’ learning is based on sheer memory. “Yes, they know a lot of information but they just don’t know how to use it creatively,” he charged.

“Chinese students are more sensitive to the arts; you’ll find they have already finished reading some good novels. But native American students are not: They read novels probably because they are forced to.”

In his leisure time, Dauthier reads books and magazines like *China Today* and *Beijing Review*. And the shelves in his room are heavy with books. He can also play three instruments: the violin, mandolin and clarinet. “I learned violin by the force of my father, learned mandolin myself during the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) period and started the clarinet just two months ago.”

Dauthier, who says he enjoys the single life in Beijing, insists he is not a romantic - although he’d like to have dinner with colourful candles on the table. “That’s the life I’ve chosen,” he mused. “Quite a few westerners come to China because they are dispatched here on business. They get huge salaries, apartments, cars, etc. But they don’t really live in China, while I am.”

“Once I left China for New Zealand and I found myself at a loss in the cultural environment, and when I came back Beijing, I felt comfortable again.”

Parts of China, such as Guangdong Province, are now accepting permanent residence applications from foreigners in high-level positions or those married to Chinese nationals. Although Dauthier does not meet any of these requirements so far, according to the Xinhua News Agency, “Also included are people who have made outstanding contributions or are of special importance to China” - where Dauthier may very well fit the bill.



The shelves in Dauthier’s room are laden with books.



Clay figurines depicting wedding (left) and funeral (right) processions.

Relics Cast Light on Old Customs



By Li Ruifen

Life is complex. Begun with our own innocent cry and ended with the sorrowful weeping of others, we experience during our journey the rejoicing of birth, the bitterness and sweetness of growing up, the excitement of marriage and raising our own children, and the sorrow of loss of loved ones.

The rapid pace of modern life has weakened the importance of these big events, especially in terms of the traditional folk customs that accompanied them, and which once served to bind society together, providing order and color to our lives. Some of these disappearing customs are preserved at the Beijing Folk Arts Museum.

With only 300 or so objects from the Ming and Qing dynasties and the Republic of China period, the Cultural Relics Exhibition for Folk Etiquettes and Customs is like a flowery and magnificent picture scroll of human life, embodying the folk etiquettes and customs of northern China.

A good beginning

The exhibition begins in a delivery room, with the start of a new life – the birth of a baby. Traditionally, the room where a baby is born was carefully chosen and well prepared. The bed is enclosed with several piles of quilts, to prevent any cold breeze from harming the health of the mother and assuring the smooth delivery of the baby.

Three days after the birth, a ceremony called *xisanli* is held. The baby is bathed carefully from head to foot. “Wash the head, to be a lord; Wash the waist, to be wealthy; Wash the legs, to be a magistrate; Wash the buttocks, to be important.” This bathing rhyme for the baby embodies not only cleanliness and vitality, but also the good will for him or her to become a great person in the future.

Growing up day by day, the baby passes through a series of ceremonies marking one month, 100 days and one full year, carrying the hardships and expectation of its parents. *Zhuazhou* (the grabbing test to foresee a baby's future), which is held when the baby is 100 days old, is one of the most interesting ceremonies. A set of objects are placed in front of the baby, including a book, an abacus, a knife, a signet ring, and a comb. According to the first thing the baby grabs and plays with, his future career can be foretold.

With the birth of a baby, the grandmother is probably one of the happiest family members. It is usually



Dengquguan, ornamental containers traditionally given to a bride.



Socks with classical texts written on them, worn by scholars seeking to pass the imperial examination by hook or by crook!



Fengguan, a crown worn during their wedding by female members of the imperial family.

she who collects several pieces of leftover cloth from several families and makes the baby a cloth called *baijiayi* (cloth from 100 families), symbolizing the love and concern of the elders.

Growing into adulthood

Some of our sweetest memories of childhood come from the games and toys we played with. Katydid kept in special boxes, little lanterns, iron hoops and peg-tops used to be popular among children. There is even a wooden toy plane and a cockhorse in the exhibition, which were made by the first toy factory that produced western toys in China.

When old enough to attend school, children, especially boys, will be sent to private schools (*sishu*). At such a momentous occasion, they might receive presents such as stationery boxes, brush pens and inkstones.

The adulthood, or *ding* ceremony, marks the end of childhood. It is a turning point for a boy to shoulder the responsibility of raising the family. And for girls, they will have their hair plaited to the back into a bun, which means she will have to behave in a “ladylike” manner henceforth. A beautiful headdress on display illustrates the strict etiquette women were subject to. When a lady is walking, she is not supposed to look around, only face ahead. The *buyao* worn as an ornament, also

Photos by Bao Wei

served as a reminder of this restriction, making a loud noise if the wearer turned her neck.

Wedding ceremony

The wedding is always the big event in a person's life. In the old days, the parents would shoulder the responsibility of finding a suitable spouse for their son or daughter. The process formally begins with a letter of proposal sent by the boy's family to the girl's. The two families then determine whether the match will be auspicious by studying the horoscopes of the boy and girl. If the signs are favorable, the girl's family will send a letter of acceptance to the boy's family. The next step is for the two sides to send each other betrothal gifts, until the day of the wedding comes.

On the day of the ceremony, the bride is carried in a sedan chair covered with a red cloth to the groom's house. On arriving, she should not enter the gate directly, but rather step over a brazier and then a saddle, which symbolizes a prosperous and a peaceful life. The couple will generally see each other for the first time in the bridal chamber, and it is often joked that the groom will be so nervous about meeting his bride that he must drink a lot of wine to boost his courage.

The ceremony is completed when the newlyweds share a drink of *jiaobeijiu*, a spirit drunk from two cups tied with a red cord, arm-in-arm.

The two are then officially man and wife.

Included in this section of the exhibition is an unusual announcement of a group wedding ceremony. In 1937, in a move to encourage simple and economical wedding ceremonies, the government of Beijing (as Beijing was then known) organized the first group wedding ceremony in China. Several couples attended that ceremony and became part of the turning point of wedding culture in China.

Ending with dignity and love

After the marriage comes children, who pass through the same rituals as their parents, middle age, then old age, until finally there comes a day when one leaves the world. Helping to alleviate the pain of separation, solemn ceremonies are held to mark the loss of a loved one.

The burial ceremonies of ancient times were very different to those of today. In the past, when someone passed away, his or her children would post an obituary notice inviting people to the burial ceremony, or at least inform the relatives and friends orally if the family was not rich enough. Paper money was printed and paper puppets made for burning during the funeral ceremony, symbolizing the wish that the departed would have money to spend and people to talk with in the next life, and the favorite belongings of the deceased would be placed with them in the coffin.

After the funeral ceremonies were completed, people would put images of their ancestor on the wall and make offerings to them during anniversaries, believing that their souls have never left, but linger in the figures, protecting the offspring from misfortune.

Life is a long, complex and ever changing process. Walking through these exhibition rooms gives a glimpse of how people in times gone by celebrated, mourned and marked the events that have always been milestones in our lives. Some of these rituals and customs seem strange, even incomprehensible today, but they remain a valuable and fascinating legacy of those vanished times.

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What's on DVD

By Wang Yue



Ben-Hur

William Wyler's *Ben-Hur*, starring Charlton Heston, is one of the classic Biblical epics of the 20th century. The 1959 film won 11 academy awards, including best picture. Before Charlton Heston accepted it, the role of Ben-Hur was turned down by Burt Lancaster, Rock Hudson and Paul Newman. English and French with English, French, Portuguese and Spanish subtitles. DVD 9



The Isle (aka Seom)

Mute Hee-Jin is working as a clerk in a fishing resort selling bait, food and occasionally her body to the fishing tourists. One day she falls in love with Hyun-Shik, who is on the run from the police. Directed by Ki-duk Kim. Korean with English, Chinese and Korean subtitles. DVD 5



Home on the Range

Yet another story about farm animals saving their farm and hunting for a notorious outlaw. Disney continues to show it is interested in hand drawn animation but not 3D film. English soundtrack with English and Chinese subtitles. DVD 5

Rhinoceros Revives Memories of a Master



Ma Lu (Duan Yihong) and Ming (Wang Ning) in Meng Jinghui's latest production of *Rhinoceros in Love*. Photo by Li Yan

By Jacqueline Yu

For many young drama fans in Beijing, it was the experimental works of Meng Jinghui that first awoke their love of theater. His ability to make audiences laugh and cry, and the way some lines from his plays have lived on after the final curtain, become popular idioms, mark him as a true innovator.

The 37-year-old director's rise to fame started in the summer of 1999 when the hit *Rhinoceros in Love* premiered at China Youth Art Theatre.

"It's a simple story," said Liao Yimei, the author and wife of Meng Jinghui, at its premiere. "A man falls in love with a woman, and does everything he possibly can to win her love."

In the wake of commercial and critical success, Meng has not bid adieu to his past productions, but continues to reinvent the drama, staging a second version of *Rhinoceros* in 2003.

Not content with allowing his

actors simply to reprise the scenes they have already performed several dozen times, Meng has made many modifications while retaining the essence of the play. Some limericks, for example, have been changed to make fun of some recent events and trends that many Chinese feel need to be poked fun at.

The set, also, is completely new. The Dali-esque clock card table, the huge eye upstage and the iron framed bed have disappeared, replaced by rows of heating radiators, a huge mirror (taken as a screen to reflect abstract films) and a chair.

For those who saw the 1999 version starring Meng's former classmate, film star Guo Tao (To Live) as Ma Lu, the despairing lover, and Wu Yue as Ming Ming, the girl Ma Lu loves, it takes a little time to adapt to the new partnership of Duan Yihong, who is so thin he looks like a teenager at times, and Wang Ning who, conversely, has a stronger, healthier appearance than slight Wu. But

once Guo and Wu's faces faded from memory, Duan and Wang's performance actually give the play a younger, more delicate touch.

Unlike in the original production, in which the songs were performed by a singer standing at the back of the stage, Duan and Wang sing all the songs themselves, and carry it off beautifully.

Duan meanwhile is a more dynamic young lover, attacking his role with more energy than Guo did, jumping rope along with Ming Ming and crazily striding over the radiators while speaking aloud his thoughts.

Rhinoceros in Love has helped cultivate a new generation of theater audience. This third version of the play can be looked on as a nostalgic journey, but Meng's many fans must be wondering whether such reenactments of past glories are all that is left to look forward to, or whether he will come up with a new classic that people will still be talking about in another five years' time.

Ancient Melodies Retain Their Magic

By Gareth George

The traditional Naxi music of Lijiang has a history dating back several centuries. Hailing from the foot of the Himalayas, the Naxi Ancient Music Orchestra came together in 1981, and first performed publicly in 1986. Since then, they have become one of the most famous traditional music orchestras in China, and have performed several times in Europe and the US. Last weekend, the orchestra performed at Beijing's Century Theatre, their fourth visit to the capital.

Band leader Xuan Ke, looking much younger than his 75 years, regaled the audience with the first of many snappy monologues on the history of his performers before introducing the first piece, *Eight Dragons*, which he described as

symbolizing the harmony between man and nature. Unfortunately, the acoustics in the Century Theatre do not so much envelop the audience in sound, as tantalize the senses, forcing one to crane toward the stage like a charmed snake.

There were no such problems when the master introduced his latest protege – a young shepherdess with no classical training. Her powerful, unaccompanied voice was hauntingly eerie; mournful, then joyous. Xuan Ke claimed she tended her sheep on one mountain, while her boyfriend lived on another, requiring her to be able to make herself heard over a considerable distance. After hearing her sing, this seemed an entirely plausible explanation.

It is often easy to forget that

the individuals who dedicate their lives to classical art are doing more than preserving centuries of culture. Listening to these musicians, seeing them beaming at the audience between pieces, one could feel the love they had for the form, and could not help but be touched by it.

As the concert passed the two hour mark, Xuan Ke looked at his watch and said the next piece would be the last, and although the majority of the crowd seemed anxious for more, no one could begrudge the efforts of the musicians, most of whom looked well past retirement age. Appropriately, the final piece was called *The Old Man*, in reference to Lao Tzu (Lao Zi), giving the audience a lasting memory of Naxi music with its metronomic throb of metal and drum, and the tigerish, throaty growl of the cymbals.

WORLDWIDE



Meryl Streep

Mobsters and Angels Bask in Emmy Glory

Mob hit *The Sopranos* strong-armed its way to success at the annual Emmy awards, while *Sex and the City* heroine Sarah Jessica Parker finally hooked up with a long-awaited best comedy actress statuette.

The biggest winner of the night was the star-studded mini-series *Angels in America* – a television adaptation of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning play about the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, which ended the night with a record-matching 11 awards.

The Sopranos, which had 20 nominations going in to the ceremony at the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium, grabbed the best drama series Emmy that many felt to be overdue, as well as best supporting drama actor and actress awards for on-screen couple Michael Imperioli and Drea de Matteo. (AFP)



Britney Spears

Spears Weds Again

Pop singer Britney Spears married her fiance, dancer Kevin Federline, in a surprise ceremony, her record label said Sunday.

"She did marry him yesterday," Jive Records spokeswoman Sonia Muckle said. She declined to provide further details. The wedding was held Saturday evening at a private home in the Studio City area with 20 to 30 people attending, *Entertainment Tonight* said on its website.

Spears, 22, and Federline, 26, announced their engagement in June after dating since early this year. It was the second marriage in nine months for Spears. (AP)



Dior Reports Profit Surge

Groupe Christian Dior, which controls the Christian Dior Couture fashion design business and luxury product giant LVMH, reported that first-half profits had surged by 58.6 percent.

Net profit after minority payments was 157 million euros (US \$190.9) from 99 million euros in the same period of last year. Operating profit rose by 14 percent to 1 billion euros from 880 million euros and net current profit by 36 percent to 217 million euros from 159 million euros.

The group said Monday that it expected Christian Dior Couture to achieve a strong increase in operating profit in the full year after a very strong performance in July and August. (AFP)



Paris Hilton

Life Advice from Hilton Heiress

Celebrity socialite Paris Hilton, who shot to infamy after a raunchy sex video of her flooded the Internet, is now teaching girls how to behave and let their "inner heiress out."

The 23-year-old Hilton dishes out her pearls of party-life wisdom in a 178-page book, *Confessions of an Heiress*, published this month by Fireside, which is more scrapbook than memoir, with pictures outnumbering paragraphs.

"It's just a look inside my life," says the heiress to the hotel fortune, who suggests a weekend in St-Tropez in the south of France for beating the blues. "It's about my friends and dating tips and do's and don'ts of dressing. It was hard, but it was a really fun project," Hilton told Reuters in a recent interview. (Reuters)

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Internships: Doors To Bright Futures

By Xie Lixue

Practice makes perfect is a saying that many recent college graduates should keep in mind as they prepare to enter the work world with little to no real professional experience. Many companies, especially rapidly growing ones, like to bring in fresh minds and energetic young people, but sometimes not without asking first candidates to get their feet a bit wet.

As a result, increasing numbers of international companies are establishing connections with Chinese universities to provide internships to promising students. These positions are intended to provide practical experience for students while also promoting the companies' corporate cultures and cultivating a force of potential new employees ready to make an impact.

Everybody wins

Many big enterprises like IBM, Siemens and Sino-US Metlife Insurance Company have learned that intern programs can work to the benefit of all involved, as Michael Kwang from the human resources department of IBM attested.

Participants in IBM's Pathway Internship Program constitute strong future staff members or potential clients who clearly understand the company's values, operations and management style. The interns themselves get to learn far more about the realities of the business world than they could in any textbook, Kwang said.

Expanded contact with the professional world can also allow universities and colleges to tailor their academic courses and adapt new technologies and information.



A recruiter meets with a young man interested in the "intern training course for unemployed graduates" advertised on this sign at a job fair in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province on August 30. Through many domestic companies were initially reluctant to take on interns, increasing numbers have discovered that internships provide excellent means for grooming top employees and managers of tomorrow. At the same time, interns should weigh the negligible financial compensation of such positions against the valuable opportunities for real work experience in stimulating environments.

Photo by Photocom

From intern to employee

Compared with many companies' tough employee recruitment policies, the process of applying for an internship can seem easy and actually interesting, though top positions are still quite competitive.

Ma Qing, human resources manager at Siemens (China) said that the process began at his company with on-line applications followed by interviews and selection.

"The time schedule for bringing in in-

terns is very flexible. Interns start their work when a vacancy opens in their area of expertise or interest," Ma said.

Internships can open the door to full-time jobs at many companies. More than 70 percent of the 130 people participating IBM's Blue Pathway Program this year are expected to stay at the company when the program ends. Likewise, interns made up a significant proportion of the recent graduates hired by Sino-US Metlife Insurance

Company this year.

Bridging the gap

The past few years, the media has often reported on the difficulties many people face in China's very competitive job market. But, at the same time, many companies have complained they simply cannot find enough talented people to fill their recruiting needs. Internships are excellent means of bridging this gap for job hunters and employers.

Tale of a Former Intern

By Ji Wenzhuang

Participation in this summer's Blue Pathway Internship Program at IBM was a great experience for me, and in those two months I learned a lot about business, the company's culture and the newest technologies, all of which has helped me improve myself and plan my future career.

Every intern in the program was put under a mentor and manager, who offered patient assistance despite being very busy.

One time, my mentor stayed until 10 pm on a Friday night to help me with one of my projects, even though she had other things to do. When she had time, she would tell me about her experiences and opinions about getting along with people at work, guiding projects to success and grabbing opportunities.

When I started, I was a bit



Ji Wenzhuang is now studying for a master's degree in desalinization engineering at Tsinghua University. Photo provided by Ji Wenzhuang

nervous and very careful in my work. My mentor counseled me to believe in myself while helping me learn practical business skills, such as communication, to back up my confidence. Through the internship, I learned that attitude, trust and responsibility are often more important to business success than knowledge and

skills.

From my experience, I would say being able to cooperate with many excellent people in an enjoyable, challenging environment can push interns forward while helping them find direction. An internship is an excellent way to start a career.

(Edited by Xie Lixue)

Ministry Offering More Chinese Teaching Diplomas

By Xie Lixue

In a September 15 announcement, China's Ministry of Education officially loosened previous restrictions to allow more Chinese, and foreigners in particular, to obtain certification for teaching Chinese as a foreign language around the world.

The certificates are available to candidates who pass the university's three-tiered testing system and holders must begin teaching within a given period for their certificates to remain valid.

Over 25 million people around the world are learning Chinese, but only 3,600 teachers hold these coveted certificates, far below the rapidly rising demand.

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors. Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience. Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred. Please send resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com.

Jobs

Mr. Chen, a Chinese Canadian, graduate from Shanghai Tongji University, proficient in English and German. Worked as a country manager of a Chinese company in the US in 1995 and emigrated to Canada in 1998. Living in Toronto at present and active in business in North America.

Interested to work as an agent for Chinese companies or to make arrangements for the establishment of reps office in Canada and the US.

Please contact: Guanjun Geoffrey Chen Tel: 001-905-508-1700 (8-11am, local time), 0392-3931163, 3336537 in China

I am Alen. I am looking for a person to work in my company. Job description: help to renew Chinese visas, green cards and call foreign embassies in Beijing and send emails.

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Please contact Miss Xie at: 62373739, 13114513646 Email: Flora2@sina.com

Female, Beijinger, 35 years old, B.A. degree, majored in English, looking for part-time job as editor (humanities-related), Mandarin teacher or translator.

Tel: 67343067 Email: wlj6166@yahoo.com.cn

The New Century High School in Zhuozhou (60 kilometers south of Beijing), Hebei Province, is looking for native English speakers to teach English part-time. Chinese capability preferred. Four classes each month. Workloads and wages open to discussion. Please send resumes to: Feida Group Co. Ltd., Da Shiqiao Bei, Zhuozhou, Hebei Tel: 0312-389 0898, 389 2678, Email: mouyur@chinaren.com

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

北京青年报 BEIJING TODAY 今日北京

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The University of Otago was founded in 1869, making it the oldest university in New Zealand, and has since cultivated a reputation for its academic excellence and beautiful campus in the small city of Dunedin on the South Island.

This Monday, Wayne Angus, deputy director of the International Office of the University of Otago, chatted with our readers as the last guest in *Beijing Today's* Focus on New Zealand.

The University of Otago offers a wide range of course, as well as many campus services to support and aid students domestic and foreign. Childcare is available for students with kids, recreation facilities on and off campus are easily accessible and restaurants and mess halls on and off university grounds offer all kinds of food so foreign students can get a taste of home.

Advantages and basics:

Compared with the other universities in NZ, what are the advantages of University of Otago? — Jackie Zhang

1. The University of Otago has a special place within the New Zealand educational framework. 2. It is New Zealand's oldest university, a comprehensive research and teaching institution, and offers a unique campus lifestyle to its 19,000 students. 3. Chinese students can access high quality teaching and research facilities in a small city (Dunedin, population 121,000) where the overwhelming focus is on education. 4. Dunedin is a safe and uncrowded destination and an excellent location for field-based research and study in the scenic South Island.

How many campuses does your university have?

— rabbitear

Our main campus is in Dunedin and we have branches of our medical school in Christchurch and Wellington.

China ties:

Do you have any joint programs in China? — batman

No, we do not offer joint programs with Chinese institutions at this time.

The University of Otago has three principal university partners in China: Jilin University, Xi'an Jiaotong University and Huazhong University of Science and Technology. These partnerships center around the exchange of teachers and students and research collaboration.

Can you introduce something about the sister city link with Shanghai?

— xiaozhang

The sister city link has been active for over 10 years. There are regular joint visits by businesspeople and people in local government. There are also sporting and cultural exchanges. One year we had an excellent exhibition here from the Shanghai museum.

Courses:

What are the strongest subjects in your university?

— blueocean

The university has specific teaching and research strengths in the medical, biomedical, biological and natural sciences as well as the liberal arts and law.

Chinese students on campus:

How many students are there in your university? And how many Chinese students? What subjects are most popular with Chinese students?

— first and second

We have 19,000 students en-

Otago Offers Helping Hand for Better Learning



Wayne Angus

rolled. There are 2,600 overseas students and 700 are from China. Many Chinese students are taking business, computing or health science courses.

Do you limit the number of Chinese students that can be recruited? — tea tea

The University seeks to have a diversified international population constituting no more than about 12 percent of the total university enrolment. The university is also anxious to ensure that no one country contributes more than 25 percent of the total international enrolment.

At present, both China and the US constitute about 25 percent each of the total international enrolment.

Applying:

How many semesters do you have each year? When is the best time to apply?

— monkeyking

We have two semesters: February-June and July-November. We also have a summer school in January-February each year. Most students start their studies at Otago in February.

Can I forward my application to the university's reps in Beijing? Or can you tell me another way to contact?

— monkeyking

We will attend an education fair in Beijing on October 23



Photos provided by the University of Otago

to 24. We also have representatives in China — check http://www.otago.ac.nz/international/more_info/agents.html.

You can also contact the University directly by mail: International Office University of Otago PO Box 56 Dunedin New Zealand Tel: +64 3 479 8344 Fax: +64 3 479 8367 Email: internationaladmissions@otago.ac.nz Web: www.otago.ac.nz/international

What is the average estimate for tuition fees and living costs? — gorilla

Chinese students have the potential to access very affordable tuition costs, typically 77,000 yuan to 132,000 yuan for undergraduate programs and 96,000 yuan to 137,000 yuan for post-graduate programs. Foundation study is 80,000 yuan and English language tuition is 2,050 yuan per week.

Living costs in Dunedin city

are very reasonable and the compact nature of the city means that there are no significant travel costs. Expect to pay approximately 60,000 yuan per 10-month academic year in living costs. Most students live within walking distance of the university and the shopping precinct.

Scholarships:

What scholarships are provided for international students, especially Chinese students? — hard stone

We have eight scholarships for international students: four for master's study and four for PhD study. They can be awarded for any field of study at the university.

Living and playing:

What accommodations does your university provide? — clouds

We have 12 catered halls of residence that offer single rooms for each student. There are also many flats or apartments and home-stay can be arranged for students at our Language Center. The halls of residence provide personal support and also help with study.

Are there any organizations or communities in your university that are organized by or for Chinese students? — playgirl

Chinese students organize many activities throughout the year for themselves and for local people to understand more about Chinese culture. There is also a local Chinese society, which fosters relationships and understanding between Dunedin and China. They are particularly active with our sister city link with Shanghai.

Are there any sports or recreational activities available? — little voice

Yes, you can make full use of the gymnasium or our clubs and societies center for table tennis, badminton etc. Most activities are free of charge. And because Dunedin is a smaller city, it is very easy to use citywide recreation facilities like parks, tennis courts and swimming pools.

I am a young mother and hope to continue my business studies in New Zealand. On your website, I learned that your university provides childcare. I wonder if this service is provided to students? — dating

There are many childcare facilities close to the campus. It should be no problem getting your daughter a place. Many staff working or studying at the university have their children there during the day.

Suggestions to Chinese students:

I'm preparing to study in New Zealand, but I don't know how to choose a good school and a good major.

— sam xu

There are a variety of types of educational institutions in New Zealand. While not of all of these institutions have a purpose of preparing students for university study, they can still be high quality institutions.

The important thing for prospective Chinese students is to determine what outcomes they want before they leave China for study. If the intention is university study, then it is important that students choose a pathway that will provide appropriate academic and English preparation. If in doubt about choosing a pathway program, check with universities about their ability to accept you for study.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

Notice

Next Monday, the focus of the Study Abroad Salon will shift to learning in Austria, when guest Evelyn Woell-Zhang, who is in charge of press affairs and education consulting at the Austrian Embassy in Beijing, talks to prospective students about the virtues of Austria's universities.

You are welcome to log into our website at: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com> or forward your questions to the host Ayi at: ayi@ynet.com.

Time: Monday, September 27, 2-3 pm

通知

《今日北京》留学聊天室将在下一周邀请到奥地利使馆的张圆婴女士 (Ms. Evelyn Woell-Zhang) 做客, 为大家解答在奥地利学习和生活的问题。张圆婴女士在奥地利使馆长期负责中国学生对留学奥地利的咨询工作。

欢迎大家届时光临我们的网站: <http://bjtoday.ynet.com> 或把您的问题发送到主持人阿义的信箱中: ayi@ynet.com 时间: 周一 (9月27日), 下午2点到3点

Upcoming Overseas Study Events:

Studying in the US:

Topics: Applying for bachelor's, master's and PhD degree courses, scholarships, and visas

Time: September 25, 10 am

Venue: Ziming Mansion, B12, Xinzhongjie, Dongcheng
Tel: 6415 9677

Applying for Master's Degree Courses in French Universities

Topics: Introductions of French universities

Analysis of differences between studying in France, the UK and Australia

Time: September 25, 2 pm

Venue: Beijing JJJ Overseas Education Consulting & Service Co., Miyang Mansion, Yong'andongli, Jianguomenwai Avenue, Chaoyang

Tel: 6568 5656 ext. Department of French Education

Introduction to University of South Australia

Courses promoted: Bachelor's and master's degree in business

Basic enrollment requirements:

Bachelor's degree courses: at least one year study in a domestic university

Master's degree courses: bachelor's degree; some subjects require working experience

Time: September 27, 10 am

Venue: Guozhong Business Mansion, 33 Dengshikou Street, Dongcheng

Tel: 6522 9780 ext. Department of Australian Education (Please make appointment beforehand)

Introduction to Korean Universities

Universities included: Korea University, Yonsei University, Kyung Hee University, Dankook University, Sungkyunkwan University, Ewha University, Hongik University, Hanyang University.

Time: September 26, 10 am

Venue: Guozhong Business Mansion, 33 Dengshikou Street, Dongcheng

Tel: 6522 9780 ext. Department of Korean Education



Yang Zhenning

Think Ahead: Pick a Promising Subject

By Lu Pinrou

The road to success in studies, work and life can start with a small step in the right direction.

"If you want to study abroad, choose a promising subject that might be hot in the coming five to 10 years," Nobel prize winning physicist Yang Zhenning recommended during a speech delivered to a captive crowd of students at China Foreign Affairs University last Thursday.

Yang said he was very lucky to have entered the emerging field of high-energy physics when he went to the US to study in the mid-1940s, because it proved a field ready to explode, propelling him to career success.

When asked why he chose to stay in the United States after he completed his doctoral degree, Yang explained, "When I finished my PhD, I was detained in the US due to immigrant policy after the Korean War. But all the Chinese students of my generation have deep roots in China, and bore great hopes to make contributions to our country."

Yang praised China's opening up policy, particularly for allowing Chinese students to study abroad.

Born in 1922, Yang went to the US in 1945 and stayed there for about 60 years. He won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1957 and returns to China to live in Tsinghua University, where he spent his childhood and his father was a professor. He is applying for a Chinese "green card", or permanent residence permit, and expects to get it in one month.

Ask Ayi:

Q: I haven't take part in the gaokao this year. If I apply for French universities, will I be accepted? — chenchen800

A: French universities are willing to accept international students who have been enrolled in universities in their countries. That means that only Chinese students who have qualifying scores in the *gaokao* may be accepted by French universities. Being enrolled at a domestic university is a precondition for applying to French universities.

Q: I took the IELTS exam in August and got a 7 score. Will this score help me get into a mass media program at a UK university? Which UK university offers the best mass media program? — 017daxia

A: Some universities in the UK require students to have language scores above 7.5, while some set a bottom line of 6.5. Your IELTS score should meet the entry requirements for mass media programs at most UK universities.

Universities in the UK generally look for three things in students applying for mass media courses: language fluency, learn-

ing background and working experience. You should provide your complete school transcript and records of any work experience in your applications. Contacting universities directly could also prove helpful.

Q: Can foreign students take part-time jobs in France, and do French universities offer internships? — big congya

A: All international students in France, including university freshmen, have the right to take part-time jobs, as long as they register in a university recognized by the state social insurance authorities.

In recent years, many French universities have begun requiring students to get practical experience in companies and other organizations. Faculty advisors are provided to help students through this, and the work practice or internships can be done during or after course studies are complete. Work practice terms normally last one to six months, and some employers will offer students stipends or other financial support.

Q: A professional consultant told me that I had to take the TEF examination before I go to France to study. What is

the TEF? — Tower-cake

A: The TEF examination is the official examination of students' French language abilities. All students that have chosen courses taught in French must take the examination. Otherwise, they cannot apply for long-term visas to study in the country.

The exam includes three parts: reading comprehension, listening comprehension and vocabulary and sentence structure. There is also a selective writing examination.

TEF scores are valid only for one year.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

Ads

by the Book

By Sabu

The steep rise of the Beijing Longzhimei Advertising Bookshop can be considered a reflection of the similarly rapid development of the advertising and public relations industries in this city.

Ms. Gao and her husband, both advertising professionals dismayed by the dearth of ad-related publications in town, first opened the store, originally named the Beijing Advertising Man Bookshop, in 1995. As business picked up, they renamed it Longzhimei and eventually moved to a bigger, better location in bustling Dongsishitiao.

Responding to rising demand, their store now not only sells books, but also offers a membership club, telephone booking service, home delivery and shipping to seven other domestic cities. The bookshelves have also expanded to include nearly 1,000 volumes covering advertising, design, marketing and media. The many helpful guides introduce the latest in fonts and colors, preparing video materials, marketing theories, real estate advertising and much more.

Since 1997, the owners have even run their own publishing brand that prints classics in the advertising field in Chinese, such as a translation of *Confessions of an Advertising Man* (29.8 yuan paperback, 50 yuan hardcover), the famed book by David Ogilvy, father of modern advertising, and *Aomei Youqing* by Taiwan advertising forerunner Zhuang Shufen.

A wide range of global ad magazines is also available, running from pricey volumes like *ID* and *Colors*, which sell for over 100 yuan each, to the more reasonable *Cream* and *Milk*, Hong Kong mags priced at 30 yuan and under. Customers professional and amateur are welcome to scour the shelves or settle into a chair for a deeper browse in this comfortable, one-of-a-kind shop.

Where: No. 205, Building A, Huapu Center, 9 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 8409 4088



Photo by Sabu

Photo Flashbacks

By Wang Yao

There is an easy way to get that Old Beijing-y feel in your home, be it an old courtyard or a flat in an ultra-modern skyscraper. Simply put nails in the walls and hang black-and-white photos taken decades ago or old-timey paintings, all on sale at the shop Ju Gu Zhai, which means "antique house."

Many of the intriguing and evocative photos on sale were collected by the store's owner. One remarkable print captures a bustling Beijing market of the late Qing era. Flags and wooden tablets proclaim stores' names, rickshaws ply the street and passengers wear long gowns and sport queues or long ponytails.

A quieter feel fills another picture that portrays Anxinli Hutong. The photo is like a passageway into a past world, depicting a traditional, carved wood door and corridor lined with bricks and tamped earth. Simple

furniture fills the space, while a doorplate makes the year clear.

Colorful paintings present more lustrous celebrations of Beijing's past, depicting splendid courtyards in a rainbow of hues, focusing on such iconic images as red walls, golden tiles, big heavy doors, stone dragons and ancient trees. Most paintings are done on large canvases, but they can also be made to order, with prices set according to size. For the ultimate in customization, the store will take a patron's photo of an old house or hutong and arrange for a professional painter to turn it into a splendid work of art.

Photos and paintings are the mainstay of the store, but by no means the only things on sale. There is also a fun, smallish collection of antiques and curious, including furniture, vases, vessels, tablets and sculptures from the times of the Qing Dynasty and the Republic era. (1911-1949).

Where: No.8 Yandai Xiejie, near Houhai, Dongcheng **Open:** 9:30 am - 7 pm **Tel:** 6400 5947



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

Sweet Sounds

By Wang Yue

It may sound like a glorified Pez candy delivery device, but Sugar Dispenser is in fact a purveyor of more lasting pleasures – music and movies, in large doses. The treats at this small, pleurably crammed shop are of distinctly Chinese style, whether it's CDs from domestic rockers, independent Chinese movies or magazines about both.

For fans of Chinese music, Sugar Dispenser is a literal treasure trove, stocking titles from labels like Modern Sky and Scream, which have big reputations but disappointingly low profiles on most local record store shelves. Aficionados and the curious can check out killer Chinese CDs from Zuoxiao Zuzhuo, Mu Ma, Secondhand Rose and many other rock, punk and metal artists, priced at around 20 to 40 yuan each.

Learn more about the scene



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

by checking out the selection of books written by music critics and some music magazines, including the alternative 'zine *Koudai Music*, put together by the store's proprietor.

Rock has undeniable, sometimes regrettable, links to fashion, and Sugar Dispenser is no different. On sale is a range of rustic jewelry, handmade of leather, wood and cotton and priced from 10 to 300 yuan. Each piece is a one-of-a-kind made by an expert craftsman, giving them artistic and rocker cred.

Where: 300m north of the west gate of Tsinghua University **Open:** 2 pm - 9 pm **Tel:** 6257 3351

Big into Japan

By Wang Yue

The oddly-named Jamic store is nothing short of a mecca for fans of Japanese pop music. The shop, also known by the longer version of its name, the Japanese Music Information Center, has an incredible, almost encyclopedic collection and a slow browsing-friendly, simple aesthetic.

Inside, there are more than 4,000 CDs and hundreds of videos and stock is conscientiously rotated monthly to keep the regular customers coming. All the acts big in Japan are represented, from glam-y bands like Glay, X Japan and Gackt to songstresses Hamasaki Ayumi and Kuraki Mai to pop mavens L'Arc~en~Ciel and SMAP.

Real fans can not only be customers, they can also be members, of Jamic's Japanese culture club. Joining is as easy as bringing in a valid ID and signing a form, and the club is open to everyone in China interested in Japanese music.

Among the perks of membership are access to a range of magazines on Japanese music and stars and free Japanese language classes. During each four-month term, volunteer students are tutored in the finer points of Japanese grammar and day-to-day conversation and given basic introductions to China's island neighbor. The classes are run on weekends, and materials personally put together by the enthusiastic



Photos by Li Yue

instructors.

Check the friendly store/club's website, www.jamic.cn (Chinese language only), for details on other Jamic activities.

Where: 1D Shenfang Dasha, Building 23, Anzhen Xili, Chaoyang **Open:** noon - 7 pm (closed Mondays) **Tel:** 6441 0966



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New York Trockadero Ballet

It's ballet and belly laughs when this all-male parody troupe gets tutu-ed up and prances around pieces including *Swan Lake*, *Le Corsaire*, *Go For Barocco*, *The Dying Swan*

and *Paquita*.

Where: Tianqiao Theatre, 30 Beiwei Lu, Xuanwu **When:** September 29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-880 yuan **Tel:** 6406 8888

Performances

St. Petersburg National Troupe Ice Ballet Show

Established in 1967, the St. Petersburg National Ice Ballet Troupe pitches itself as the world's only company capable of performing classic ballet dances on ice. The troupe includes more than 50 internationally recognized ice ballet stars that will twirl and glide in tribute to Tchaikovsky through sections of *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Hall Theater, 135 Xiahimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** September 25 - 29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-800 yuan **Tel:** 6835 4457



Moguls of Magic Show

Eight of the top magicians in the world, hailing from Australia, Canada, Holland, Russian, Sweden, Switzerland and the US, will give a tour de force show sure to blow minds and provide entertainment for people of all ages. David Copperfield thankfully not included.

Where: Capital Gymnasium, 54 Baishiqiao Lu, Haidian **When:** September 27 - 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-1,680 yuan **Tel:** 6833 5552 ext. 8235

Butterflies are Free

This opera, an adaptation of

the Broadway classic of the same name, tells the story of Don Baker, who wants to get away from his over-protective mother. Don has been blind since birth, but that doesn't stop him from setting up in a San Francisco apartment and making the acquaintance of his off-the-wall, liberated, actress neighbor Jill. Don learns the kind of things from Jill that his mother would never have taught him, while Jill learns from Don what growing up and being free are really about.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimennan Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** September 28 - 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-680 yuan **Tel:** 6501 1854



Backstreet Boys

They didn't start the boy band explosion, but they did ride it to ridiculous success. And now they're back. The Backstreet Boys, an American quintet of soft-voiced young men with fancy dancy moves, make their China debut with a big local show. It's a sure bet the emphasis will be on the Boys' string of hits in the late 1990s and 2000, before they quietly plummeted from the charts.

Where: National Olympics Center Stadium, 1 Xiaoguan Anding Lu, Chaoyang **When:** tonight, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 200-1,200 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188

Music

The Wall of Hope China 2004

Sure to be the biggest pop concert of the year, this show is headlined by new superstar Alicia Keys along with 80s' sensation Cyndi Lauper, Boyz II Men, journeyman Al Jarreau, JC Chasez and Raz B of the R&B group B2K. More acts than you can poke a stick at!

Where: Great Wall Juyongguan north gate, Changping, bus leaves north gate of Worker's Stadium at 3 pm (free bus trip back and forth for ticket holders) **When:** Saturday, 7 pm **Admission:** 100-10,000 yuan **Tel:** 6417 7845

Movies



Almost Blue

Directed by Alex Infascelli, starring Lorenza Indovina, Claudio Santamaria and Rolando Ravello. The serial killer Alessio goes around Bologna hunting for students who chat on the Internet in order to murder them and take

their identities. A policewoman hunts the killer with the assistance of a blind man able to link voices to colors. In Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'erjie, Sanlitun **When:** September 30, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187



2046

Directed by Wong Kar-wai, starring Tony Leung, Gong Li, Faye Wong and Zhang Ziyi. The highly anticipated new film from the director of *In the Mood for Love*. He was a writer. He thought he wrote about the future but it really was the past. In his novel, a mysterious train left for 2046 every once in a while. Everyone who went there had the same intention - recapturing lost memories. It was said that in 2046, nothing ever changed. Nobody knew for sure if it was true, because nobody who went there had ever come back - except for one. He was there. He chose to leave. He wanted to change...

Where: UME International Cineplex (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** Opens Tuesday, September 28 **Tel:** 6261 2851

Activities

October Holiday Dance Program

The Golden Dancing Academy is running a special family program for the October holiday featuring dance and Chinese courses designed for kids and parents. Lessons will cover the "golden dance", Rumba and Cha-cha. Chinese language courses are open to people of all ages and levels and priced at 100 yuan per class.

Where: Tenth floor, Chongwenmen Culture Center, 7 Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Chongwen **When:** September 30 - October 8, dance classes 9:30-10:30 am, 3-4 pm; Chinese language classes 10:40-11:40 am, 4:10-5:10 pm **Tel:** 6708 9567

More than Mooncakes

Chinese Culture club celebrates Mid-Autumn Festival a bit early at Dongyue Temple. The meaning of this ancient festival will be explained, while guests can check out the fascinating temple and an exhibition of a huge rabbit.

Where: meet in front of Dongyue Temple, Chaoyangmenwai Dajie, Chaoyang **When:** Sunday, 2:30 pm **Cost:** 60 yuan (members 50 yuan) **Tel:** 8851 4913

Jams



Second-hand Roses and Arken

Avoid the predictable mooncake-laden Mid-autumn Festival parties and join local music gawds Second Hand Rose and Arken for a night of satisfying rock.

Where: New Get Lucky bar, Tianze Lu, A1 Dongfang Qicai Dashijie in Laitai Flower Market, Chaoyang **When:** September 28, 9 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 8448 3335

Exhibitions

Illusion - Works by Zhou Jirong

Zhou Jirong, a graduate of the prestigious Central Academy of Fine Arts' print-making department, of which he is now deputy director, has made significant breakthroughs in his experiments with the language and form of printmaking.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwen **When:** until October 10, 10 am - 5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6525 1005

Facial Make-up of Peking Opera

This unusual painting exhibition features new takes on faces from Peking Opera by artist Wang Hanzun. Peking Opera's dramatic make-up was created to represent characters' personalities and virtues.

Where: Fafa Gallery, 1 Xiangjiang Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** until October 3, 10:30 am - 8 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8450 6688 ext. 310



Service

Chinese for Beginners on Air

Chinese for Beginners (汉语起跑线) is a new language and culture instruction program jointly produced by Radio 774 and Beijing Language and Cultural University set to hit local airways. Based on the university's textbook *The Path - Chinese Conversation for Foreigners*, the innovative learning program will focus on sentences and phrases useful in a wide range of common situations to appeal to a target audience of expatriates living in Beijing, Chinese teachers and Mandarin learners. Chinese for Beginners will be broadcast on AM 774KHz at 7:55 am and 12:55 pm Mondays through Sundays.

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

Girls looking for a female roommate to share a 3 bedroom apartment, 1 living-room (air-condition), kitchen, bathroom; telephone and Internet access (ADSL) available. Near Andingmen subway station, Jiadaokou Dongdajie. The room is 1,200 yuan per month. Contact Annie at: citic_mv@yahoo.com

Language Exchange

Lisa, 28, a business woman working in Beijing, bachelor of traditional Chinese medicine, would like to find language exchange partners and make friends. Email: lisa 6816565@yahoo.com.cn

Rinoa, a senior undergraduate student from Beijing Broadcasting Institute, is looking for a native English speaker as a language-exchange partner. Rinoa is 19-years-old and her major is Media Economics. Playing tennis is her favorite. Contact: flychan@yahoo.com.cn

I am seeking a native English speaker for keeping my English in good shape. In return, I can teach you Chinese language and culture. I am a 46-year-old Chinese-American man who works in Beijing. No flirting, be serious. Contact: xinhaigui@yahoo.com.cn

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| HBO | |
| 24 Friday | |
| National Security | 9 pm |
| 25 Saturday | |
| Biker Boyz | 9 pm |
| 26 Sunday | |
| Anger Management | 9:45 pm |
| 27 Monday | |
| The Foreigner | 10:30 pm |
| 28 Tuesday | |
| Thirteen Ghosts | 10:30 pm |
| 29 Wednesday | |
| Path to War | 10 pm |
| 30 Thursday | |
| Maximum Risk | 11:25 pm |

CCTV-9 Monday - Friday

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Around China | 6:30 am |
| Cultural Express | 8:30 am |
| Nature and Science / | |
| Chinese Civilization | 11:30 am |
| Cultural Express | 2:30 pm |
| Nature and Science / | |
| Chinese Civilization | 5:30 pm |
| Dialogue | 7:30 pm |
| News Updates / | |
| Asia Today | 8 pm |
| Sports Scene | 11:15 pm |

Saturday

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Travelogue | 9:30 am |
| Center Stage | 11:30 am |

Sunday

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Sports Weekend | 10 am |
| Documentary | 10:30 am |
| This Week | 12:30 am |

China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday - Friday

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Easy FM Afternoon | 2-7 pm |
| Fun in Beijing | 5-5:30 pm |
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |
| Saturday | |
| Music Memories | 8:05-11 am |
| Euro Hit 40 | 12:05-1 pm |
| Musique Sans Frontières | 6:05-8 pm |
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |
| Sunday | |
| Music Memories | 8:05-11 am |
| Jazz Beat | 6:05-8 pm |
| Joy FM | 9:05-11 pm |

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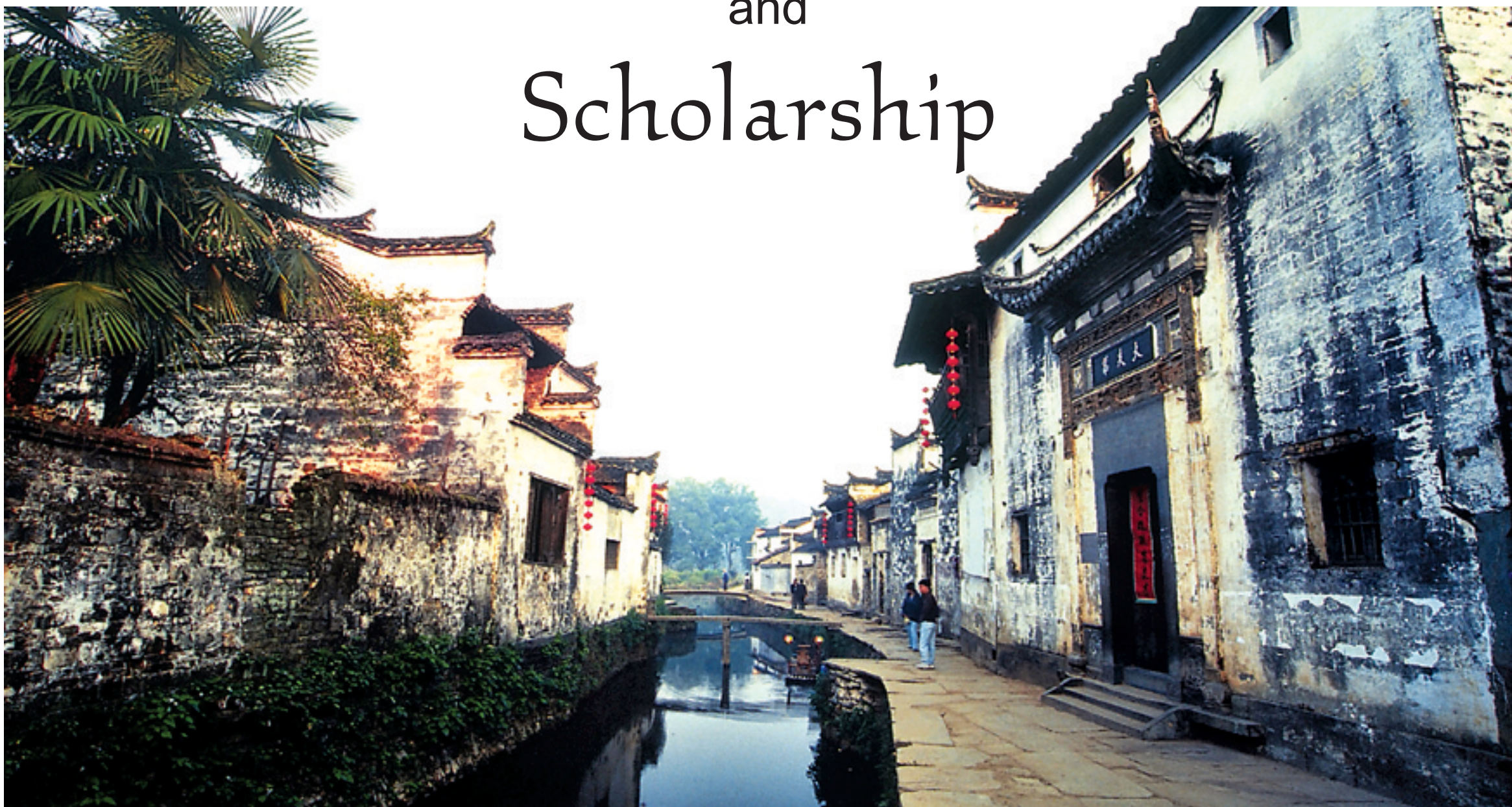
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Secluded Home of Natural Beauty and Scholarship



Yuanguocun, one of the many well preserved ancient villages in Wuyuan County.

By Shida Zhu

Wuyuan (婺源) that stands at the crossroads of Jiangxi, Anhui and Zhejiang provinces and nestles amidst high mountains is known for its ancient Ming and Qing residential houses and a rich legacy of Anhui culture. Now under the jurisdiction of Shangrao prefecture, Jiangxi Province, it used to belong to Anhui Province's Huizhou prefecture in ancient times.

In the 550 or so years of the Ming and Qing dynasties, merchants from Anhui traveled to every corner of China to do business. There was a saying that without merchants from Huizhou, a market could not be counted as a market. When these merchants made money, they invariably returned home to build houses in grand style. As troops of all colors rarely came to this secluded mountainous area, all the houses have survived centuries of wear and tear.

Wuyuan has spectacular natural scenery of mountains, streams, bamboo groves, trees, bridges, pavilions, mountain caves and ferry landings, all of which combine to present a unique picture, as if from an ideal world of peace and harmony.

Over the centuries, thousands of scholars were born and bred here, becoming high-ranking officials or leading scholars of the day. A total of 2,665 officials came from Wuyuan throughout all the feudal dynasties and 2,180 books were written by people born here. Of the Si Ku Quan Shu (四库全书), the largest encyclopaedia of feudal China, 172 sections were the work of Wuyuan scholars.

Most outstanding of all scholars were Zhu Xi, the father of

Neo-Confucianism and Zou Tianyou, one of the earliest Chinese students to study at Harvard and who presided over the construction of China's first railway.

Ziyang (紫阳), the county government seat, is a town built on mountain slopes with a river encircling it on three sides. City walls were built on the sides that face the river as an unconquerable strategic defence point.

If one wants to know more about Huizhou culture, the county museum at Chongshan contains many ancient relics and documents that tell stories of the past.

There are too many ancient towns and villages to see in one visit to Wuyuan. One possible route for sight-seeing is the eastern line: Li Keng-Wangkou-Upper and Lower Xiaoqi.

More than 260 households in Li Keng (李坑) live on both banks of a river. Bridges form the only communications between people on either side. It was the home of Li Zhicheng, a general of the third year of the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Song Dynasty.

For Wangkou (汪口) 30 kilometers north-east of the county seat, the water town has another style: it is encircled, rather than bisected, by a river. The Yu ancestral temple shows remarkable artistry of more than 100 groups of wood carving in bold relief which are considered a treasure trove by archaeologists and artists.

Upper and Lower Xiaoqi (晓起) are towns at the juncture of the Duanxin River and the Xiaoqi River. Lower Xiaoqi was the home of Jiang Renjing, a Qing official in charge of government salt trade in the Huaihe River valley in Anhui province.



The interior of a mansion in Likeng village.

Photos by ImageChina

Upper Xiaoqi commands a view of a mountain slope dotted with magnificent Qing-style mansions of high-ranking feudal officials. The gate towers of these mansions are generally decorated with carved bricks. The small lanes meandering among those ancient houses in the village are covered with green slabs. Going still upward, you will arrive in Jiangling where you will see the best pastoral beauty in Wuyuan.

Another option is the northern line: Yancun-Sixi-Qinghua-Likeng. Yancun (延村) 18 kilometers from the county seat, is a small village of exquisite beauty. It starts from a well which symbolizes fortune and from there extends in a pattern that takes the form of the Chinese character for person, 人, implying that human life is the most essential in this world.

The town boasts 56 houses built during the reigns of emperors Qianlong and Jiaqing by prospering merchants. Each of the gate towers of these houses is built in the pattern of the Chinese char-

acter “商” meaning “business.” The walled front yards are designed so that all rainwater flows into the yard, in line with the local idiom, “fertile rainwater will not go to others’ homes,” meaning that amenities are shared among the family or clan group, rather than with outsiders.

The village is known for its wood, stone and brick carvings, such as the carved pattern of sea waves with bats (“fu” meaning “bat” is a homonym for “happiness”) flying over them. This epitomizes the Chinese saying “as happy as the East China Sea.” There is also an urn carved from a whole rock. People may forecast the weather according to the transparency of the water in it.

Sixi (思溪) boasts of refined ancient architecture with more than 30 ancient houses still standing. At the village entrance there is an old roofed bridge.

At the Jingxutang Hall there is a small gourd-shaped niche with four Chinese characters inscribed above it: 敬惜字纸 (Jing Xi Zi Zhi, Please Cherish Paper),

showing respect for culture. The 12 wooden windows are carved with 96 variations of the character “壽” at an old hall of the Yu family. Other carvings feature ibis catching fish, lotus in full bloom, lotus leaves waving in the breeze and lotus roots, creating an impression of complete leisure.

The people of Qinghua (清华) are very much proud of the village's 140-meter roofed bridge, the Rainbow Bridge. It was built during the Southern Song Dynasty, more than 800 years ago. Five pavilions stand on the bridge with a very fluent and picturesque skyline. The bridge foundations of stone are scientifically built in the curved shape of a ship's bow that may most efficiently resist the force of the strongest mountain deluge.

Nestling amidst the green hills, Likeng (李坑), 45 kilometers north-east of the county seat, was built during the early years of the Southern Song Dynasty. The name of the village tells that it is the source of Neo-Confucian reason.

Many of the Qing court scholars came from this village. Si Ma Di is the mansion built by Yu Weishu, minister of defence during the early Qing years. Facing the east, the buildings are three storeyed with a walled yard. The facade is made of water-washed black bricks. The beams are carved with flower patterns and figurines from classic plays.

Virtually all the local villages have their own stories of mystery and glory. Entering any village along the way, the eye and mind of the visitor will be richly rewarded by surprises.

One of the local cultural specialties of Wuyuan is its lanterns. As bamboo grows abundantly, all

lanterns are made of bamboo slips in the shape of horses, lions, pagodas, flower boats and lotus flowers. Thanks to the action of heat from the candle light, some of the lanterns revolve, and the pictures painted on the face seem to move also.

A home of tea, the locality pays great attention to tea culture. The local tea course, the Cha Dao, is a long ceremony. As part of the Neo-Confucian influence, tea drinking embodies a moral spirit of “respect, harmony, thrift and quietude.”

The highest tribute paid to a guest is to serve him steamed soft-shelled turtle. It is entirely naturally made with only a little addition of salt and two pieces of ginger, tastes absolutely delicious and is said to have invigorating qualities.

Steamed carp head is another spicy local food, traditionally prepared for the Moon Festival. The local special products are humorously referred to as four-color goods: red for carp, green for Wuyuan tea, black for Longwei ink slab, and white for Jiangwan pear.

Quality service is provided by the three-star Golden Ox Hotel, the Liangyou Hotel and the Youhao Hotel in Ziyang. Local private bed-and-breakfast family inns are clean and give visitors the opportunity acquaint themselves with local culture and habits.

Getting there: There are airports at Tunxi, Jingdezhen, Quzhou and Nanchang. The closest of these to Wuyuan is Jingdezhen Airport, 98 kilometers away. Wuyuan is also accessible by rail, via the Beijing-Kowloon and Beijing-Fuzhou railways. Get off either at Nanchang, Jingdezhen, Shangrao or Quzhou.

Tonglicheng
Local
Escapes

Qinglongxia

By Liu An

Qinglongxia (Qinglong Gorge), in the north of Huairou, is just far enough away to give the sense of having truly escaped from Beijing, but close enough to be an easy weekend holiday option.

Offering cliff-side bungy jumping, a bathing beach complete with sand, bamboo rafting and the ancient Great Wall, Qinglongxia is a popular autumn destination. The Great Wall runs along the top of the high mountains and around Qing-

long gorge, connecting with Mutianyu Great Wall in the west and Simatai Great Wall in the east. This section of great wall was built during the Ming Dynasty, and includes a fort that belonged to the town of Ji. The beacon towers are still well preserved.

On September 20, the Qinglongxia Harvest Festival began. Visitors can pick apples, pears and haws from the many orchards in the area.

Getting there: Take bus No. 16 from Dongdaqiao or Xuan-



wumen, bus No. 936 from Dongzhimen or No. 3 tourism train from Xizhimen railway station to Qinglongxia station directly.

Drive from Sanyuanqiao to Huairou, then north along the Huairou-Fengning Road. Qinglongxia is about 7 kilometers north of Yanqi Lake.

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